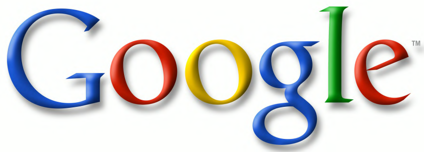
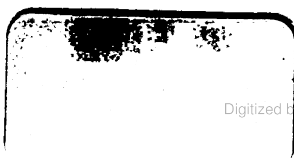
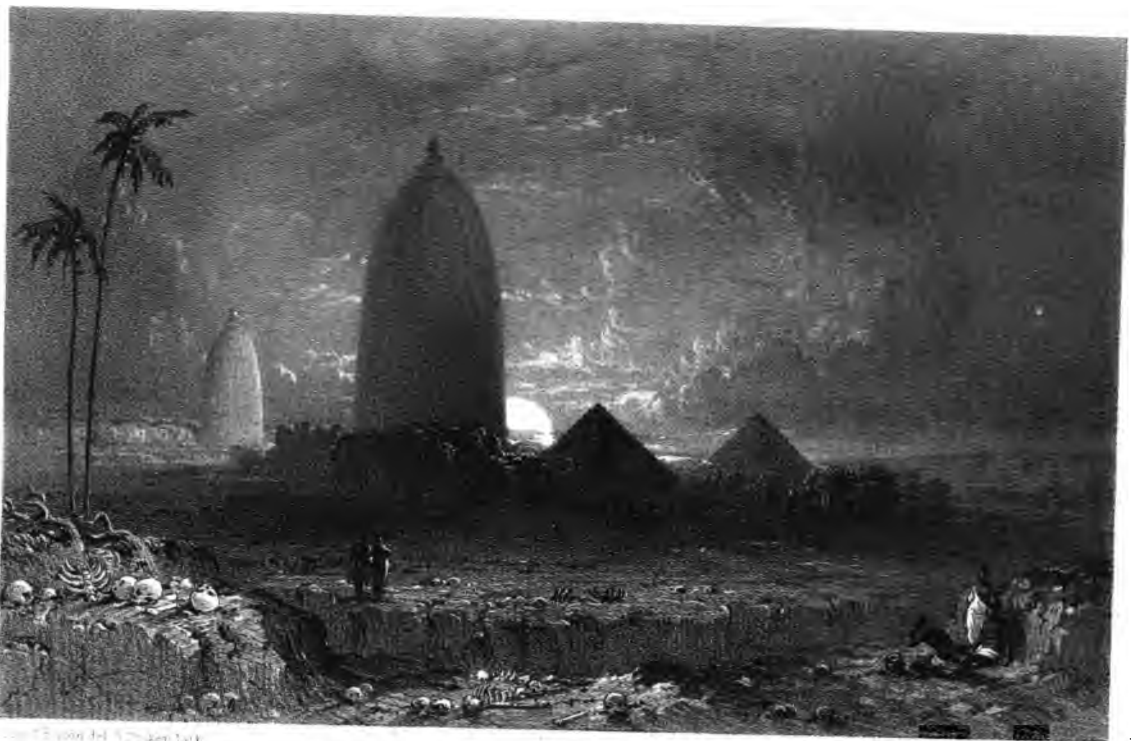








Day & Haghe Lithrs to the King.

JUGGURNAUT.

India - Description 1531

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

AND

STUDIES FROM NATURE

IN

HINDOSTAN;

EMBRACING

AN OUTLINE OF THE VOYAGE TO CALCUTTA,

AND

FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE IN BENGAL AND THE DOÁB,

FROM

MDCCCXXXI to MDCCCXXXVI.

5181

By THOMAS BACON, Lieut.

OF THE BENGAL HORSE ARTILLERY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

It may almost be regarded as a condition of authorship, that every one who publishes a work, should believe it to contain at least *something* which is not to be found in any other; that it opens some new avenue to knowledge, or that it fills some chasm in literature or science, which was never before so well supplied. The author of this work, therefore, hopes, that he may not be accused of unpardonable presumption, in confessing that he has been tempted to write and publish it by a conviction that it belongs to a class of productions which are rarer than

might be expected. It is a delineation of India and its society, Anglo-Indian and Native, exactly as they are, "nothing extenuating," and certainly not "setting down aught in malice;" in short, it is as close an imitation as possible of the process whereby local scenery is depicted to the eye.

India has now ceased to be an hermetically sealed country, and the distance between it and Europe is daily diminishing, through the facilities afforded to inter-communication. The pictures of India, therefore, which are now wanted, are not artificial and highly coloured ones, calculated, like a fairy tale, merely to recreate an idle hour; but genuine portraitures, possessing, indeed, the attractions which must be always inherent even in the most servile description of a country, where the scenery, objects, and people are so different from those in Europe: for even the manners

of English residents in India, as is well known, imbibe peculiarities in the process of *acclimation*. India, British India at least, must no longer be depicted in the shadowy colours of the Arabian Nights.

Professional duties, co-operating with curiosity, having afforded the Author, during his residence in India, opportunities of seeing much of the country remote from the Presidencies and from the ordinary track of European travellers, he has enjoyed facilities for more extensive observation than many who have passed a much longer time there. Of these facilities he has endeavoured to avail himself to the utmost; and if what he did observe, he has not expressed with the gravity of a tame journalist, if he has detailed conversations in a conversational style, and has treated some subjects in a tone which very sober readers may stigmatize as levity, his

facts are not on that account the less to be relied upon.

The Author pledges himself to the public, that none of the contents of these volumes are fictitious. He extends this pledge to the characters and adventures recorded in them, —even the most extraordinary,—the agents in which are real personages; though he has thought it his duty to substitute feigned names, and, by a few unimportant alterations of time and place, so to cloak the original, that offence might be given to none who have served him as studies. The history of Howard, for example, might be objected to as a fiction, on the ground of its improbability; but it is true, as nearly true as relation by a second party will admit. The Author does not forget the axiom of the French satirist, "*Le vrai peut quelquefois n'être pas vraisemblable;*" but he confesses himself willing to renounce what-

ever credit he might acquire by making the history more credible, for the more subordinate, though not less coveted, merit of being a faithful reporter of facts.

It may be expedient to say a word in justification of the method he has pursued in writing Oriental names and words, lest he be suspected of deviating from the ordinary practice from mere affectation. Had there been a settled and uniform system of orthography, founded upon a close approximation of the sounds of the European and Asiatic tongues, perhaps it might have been convenient to follow that system, even where not critically correct. But this is not the case, the orthography is perpetually fluctuating, the modes of spelling are almost infinite, and seldom approach the true sound. The Author, therefore, convinced that more attention is paid to this matter than formerly, both

in Europe and India, has in all cases preferred adhering to the correct pronunciation, rather than continue corruptions, which, to those acquainted with the original language, are often absurd and vulgar.

The graphic illustrations introduced are selections from a large collection in the Author's portfolio. The artist, and perhaps the general reader, will be sensible of the difficulty of adapting to so small a scale, elaborate and highly-finished drawings, without injury to the subject. The selection has consequently been made, with reference to this consideration, from those subjects which possess an interest in their picturesque effect, or are likely to be recognised by those who are acquainted with the localities. The Author does not think himself precluded from saying that his portfolio contains more important and laborious specimens, which he

may at a future time be induced to offer to the public.

The Hindu cosmogony, in common with that of many other nations, tells us that the Earth, and all things terrestrial, were formed from, or had their origin in, an egg; which many ancient sculptures, allusive to the Creation, represent as having been cherished, and brought to its present form, by the fostering care of the Good Genius, incarnate as a serpent. The celebrated specimen of this device, suspended in the temple of Hercules, at Tyre, exhibits the mundane egg enveloped in the genial folds of Agathodaimon, thus embodied, who is said to have broken the shell when the nucleus was mature. The Author, if he may be allowed to draw a parallel between great things and small, would make use of this allusion, in assuring his readers that his First Impressions would have remained a mere

ovum, had he not been induced, by the kind encouragement and indulgent opinion of his friends, to break the shell, and allow his work to go forth among the millions already in the firmament of a similar creation. A humble place is all he dares to hope for.

T. B.

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CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE OUT.

A VOYAGE across the high seas to or from India is, in most cases, so utterly monotonous and devoid of excitement, that I would plunge *in medias res* with my arrival in Calcutta, had I nothing more stirring to depict than the little incidents usually occurring in the daily routine on board a merchant ship. The few pages, however, which embrace the narrative of my outward-bound voyage to Calcutta will be found to exhibit some strange and touching scenes, which I feel confident will excite the interest of my readers. Without further preamble, therefore, I will venture to weigh anchor.

On the 20th of March 1831, we made all sail before a gentle breeze from the N.W. by N., and

during the day we continued to glide stealthily through the calm waters, until the evening shadows closed between us and the shores of England. That sinking of the heart which is perhaps experienced by all who quit their native land for the first time, would doubtless have been felt more acutely by all on board, had we not previously been detained for nearly a month close prisoners in Portsmouth, subject to all the suspense and ill-humour consequent upon a foul wind.

During the few first days at sea, everything appears sufficiently uncomfortable; nothing is ship-shape, the crew are scarcely sober, the passengers are still strangers to one another; every man appears suspicious of his neighbour, and inclined to watch his actions rather than seek his acquaintance: this however quickly wears off, and as all hands shake down into the regularity of nautical hours, mutual courtesy and confidence take place of reserve; and daily intercourse rapidly strengthens predilection or prejudice into friendship or aversion. After the first miseries of sea-sickness are surmounted, men are compelled to seek each other's society for amusement, unless they should find sufficient occupation in keeping their respective positions during a cap-full of wind.

A few days of squally weather at the commencement of our voyage effectually prevented our party from scraping acquaintance one with another, for most of them were, by the rolling of the ship and sickness, kept close prisoners in their own cabins. As the weather moderated, however, the gentlemen at first appeared on deck, or took their places at the cuddy table, one by one, with pale cadaverous visages, and enfeebled limbs;—and then a sprinkling of the gentler sex, with blanched cheeks and streaming hair, was added to our party at table, until at last we mustered our full complement. A strange diversity of character is to be met with in all mixed societies, but in very few situations can it be so fully developed as during a long voyage, where utter strangers, individuals from all classes, are thrown together, dependent upon each other, and in daily contact—not only every day, but all day.

There were very few ciphers in our circle, very few who did not add some value to our collection of curiosities. Among the choicest of our strange birds were a whole family of Swallows—Mr. and Mrs. Swallow, three Misses Swallow, and a whole brood of smaller Swallows, both Misses and Masters, going back again to India in consequence of

the elder Swallow's indigo speculations having failed, or perhaps by reason of the bankruptcy of Palmer's House, whereby it is probable that the junior branches of the Swallow family were debarred the advantages of a home-education; without which they could never expect to rival the elevated accomplishments of their more fortunate sisters.

Swallow was as singular in his manners as in his appearance, both being particularly uncouth. Though probably a man of small erudition, his own natural shrewdness and observation had supplied him with an excellent stock of general information, which was ever at the service of his friends. Mrs. Swallow had certainly been pretty: her features were small and delicately moulded, her eyes dark and languishing, and her figure still retained traces of its youthful grace; besides, she had a pretty little foot and a well-turned ankle, all in accordance with a brunette complexion, a purple lip, a small and beautifully-formed but sooty-looking hand, clearly indicative of a pedigree not purely occidental. Miss Swallow, Miss Lavinia Swallow, and Miss Virginia Letitia Swallow, were nice-looking girls, and apparently of pleasing manners, as far as we were able to judge by dis-

tant observation; for, alas! Swallow the elder had refused to introduce his daughters to any of the ineligibles, and consequently two superannuated, bilious *Koi Hies* were the only happy swains who enjoyed the felicity of the young ladies' acquaintance. I have said they were nice-looking girls; I do not mean that they were pretty, but that they were comfortable, tidy, well-dressed young ladies, anything but *distingué*, and rather too *vigoureux* to strike the refined fancy of an elaborately-apparelled writer, or even the less fastidious taste of an Addiscombe cadet.

Among the rest of our fair fellow-passengers, several are deserving of notice in their proper places, but I am anxious to introduce to the reader those only who are essential to my narrative; for this reason I pass without mention the two comical old *Koi Hies* before alluded to, though they were both of them good studies for a sketch.

I cannot, however, neglect to bring forward my peculiar friend, Major Vangricken, a fine old soldier who had lost his leg at Aracan, and a pretty good slice off the top of his cranium at Bhurtpore. Poor fellow! his memory shall be gently dealt with, for he has long since given a step to the subs of his corps. Vangricken was a man of gigantic stature, and

great bodily prowess; his features were small, but regular; and his restless eye, significant of talent and acute inquisitiveness, bore also an expression of irritation, fully accounted for by the vague subjects of his conversation. His mental infirmity was easily discovered, but not without the exhibition of a strong though warped imagination, and the pitiable wreck of what had once been a well adorned and vigorous mind. His conversation emitted sparks of an original and vivid genius, and in every discussion he managed to amuse his listeners no less than he surprised them: he possessed that unaccountable, though by no means rare combination, of puerile simplicity in some things, with brilliant conception in others, together with powerful energy of inference and argument, so surprising in many instances of insanity. The wildest speculations and most visionary schemes were grasped at by him with an avidity truly ludicrous: but then they were supported by a wonderfully plausible and imposing eloquence, which it required a close and mature investigation to expose. His favourite subjects were those of scientific and mechanical inventions, which during his furlough he had laboured to advance at the sacrifice of his health and his

means, without even the advantage of discovering the vanity of his impracticable designs. Had he lived during the reign of alchymy he would assuredly have plunged head and ears into the occult science, for he still believed in the existence of the elixir vitæ, and would have enlisted in the pursuit had he deemed any one human life of sufficient endurance to allow a hope of success.

There was one speculation upon which he had built his hopes of immortal fame, and which everlastingly engrossed his speculative ingenuity; this all-absorbing project was no other than the practicability of adapting wings to the human body. He firmly believed in the possibility of the design, and had dissipated a considerable sum of money in London in endeavouring to realize this chimera. Another of his themes, infinitely more absurd, was the idea of training the larger tribes of the winged creation to the humility of taking a rider on their backs, to be governed like a horse, by bit and bridle; or to the more complete degradation of submitting to become birds of burden, for the transportation of posts and packets. It is not improbable that these strange devices took root in his diseased imagination during his illness in Aracan, when his mind was possibly bent upon a

return to his native country; for even the plainest wishes of the heart become distorted pictures to the fevered brain of the suffering exile.

During the few first weeks of our passage, Vangricken had secluded himself much from our society upon the plea of sickness, and was therefore but little known to any of us; we were however fully aware of his infirmity, and some of the most boyish and most heedless among us had commenced already a series of practical jokes for the purpose of drawing him out of his reserve. On one occasion, he had been closetted in his own cabin during the whole of the morning, and made his appearance at the dinner table in a singular mixture of full-dress and deshabille, which I will not attempt to describe, lest I be thought to colour my picture rather too highly. As the ladies were about to withdraw from the table, Vangricken also rose, and begging their forbearance for a few seconds, requested that they would resume their seats, for that he had a word or two to say to them.

"Allow me, Captain, for one moment," said he; "ladies and gentlemen, I cry your indulgence for a brief period, while I relate to you the result of my studies this morning. I am about to

recite one of the most astounding facts, one of the most incomprehensible of coincidences which has ever occurred since chaos arrayed herself in the bright robes of nature, and stood forth in the character of the world. You have probably all of you become more or less acquainted with the maxims and various writings of the celebrated French philosopher Rochefoucault. I was this morning in deep meditation over his 'Memoirs of the Regency of Ann of Austria,' in the preface to which I stumbled upon a truth which will utterly disconcert the whole literary world. Hear me; Rochefoucault—he was a duke mind you—died *on a Saturday;* and I—I—Vangricken, *the* Vangricken, was born *on a Tuesday.*" He cast a glance of triumph round the listening circle, screwed up his mouth into an expression of the most profound importance, and turning a pirouette upon his wooden leg, strutted back to his cabin; his exit being followed by the most flattering bursts of applause, and vociferations of encore! encore!

But I have yet another character to introduce; one whose history comprises a series of those singular events, which might naturally be attributed to the fancy of a romancer; whose individuality

was stamped with those more intense characteristics which will invariably perpetuate the memory of a man either in honour or disgrace, according as he may have "ta'en the bend." This singular man was the life and soul of our party; he was an ensign of some ten years' standing, and had just been in England upon furlough, where, by his own account, he had been making the most of his time.

He shall be known to the reader as Charles Howard; in addition to the advantages of a handsome person, he possessed a suavity and gaiety of manner truly fascinating, making his attentions peculiarly acceptable to the ladies; and withal he was gifted with that rare endowment of the mind, a powerful and tenacious memory on all subjects. If he heard a song but once or twice, he would commit both the words and air to memory, and with a good voice and a ready wit, he would be sure to make a hit in singing it. A good story or a good argument he never forgot; so that he was never at a loss for an illustration: moreover his style of telling his tale, or enforcing his opinion, was whimsical and dramatic; so that, all in all, he was a valuable acquisition as a companion during a long voyage.

One morning Howard ran hastily on deck to see a shark hauled on board, and in the hurry of the moment had forgotten to put on his stock, an article of apparel which, I had noticed, he never dispensed with, even in the hottest weather. My attention was at once attracted to a broad white scar, reaching from the under part of the left jaw, across the gullet, to the opposite side of the throat. I said to him immediately, "Howard, you have forgotten your stock."

"Good God!" he cried, covering his throat with his hand; "but it is no secret now to any one: if you will come below, I will tell you all about it. I followed him to his cabin, and he told me his story nearly in the following words.

"From my first arrival in India, I led a hard life; I drank recklessly, gambled eagerly, and betted rashly, so that I speedily ran myself in debt beyond all hopes of redemption; and the assistance afforded me by some of my friends in England served only to gain me at the time a temporary extension of credit, which of course ran me deeper in the slough.

"This state of things could not last for ever: the military Court of Requests had awarded half of my pay and allowances to my creditors, and more

than once my property had been seized and sold for their benefit. Two of my intimates, who had led an equally dissipated life, suffered a similar disgrace, and we three came to a determination that as one remedy alone remained for our miseries, that remedy should be ours; and the remains of our small joint-stock were forthwith produced to procure liquor. Brandy was our specific—it was our only means of drowning care. Maddened with the spirit, we cursed life and all its troubles, and forthwith entered into a solemn vow to *wind up*.

"Some little dissension took place as to the best means to be applied, but it was at last decided that a large quantity of raw spirit should be procured, and placed upon the table, and that we should drink ourselves to death; or if any one of the party survived, he should terminate his existence with the razor. This compact we sealed by writing and signing our own death-warrants; and these being placed upon the table, we applied ourselves to the spirits, having turned out all our servants, and otherwise carefully secured ourselves from interruption.

"In this affair, I had, perhaps, less dread of consequences than my companions. I was, and still am, a decided atheist; I do not think they really

were so at heart, although they professed to be such. I had no fears of a futurity, but I could see that at times they were moved by a strong dread. All weakness of this kind, however, was speedily dispelled by the maddening effects of the spirit, and was replaced by a dark and reckless determination to prosecute our purpose.

"My own quarters were the scene of this affair. Having again and again replenished our glasses with the unadulterated spirit, we pledged each other with oaths and curses, which more than once made my own blood creep within my veins—at length, I sunk into a state of insensibility, which must have continued some hours, for when I partially recovered my faculties, the grey dawn of day was just breaking upon this scene of wanton debauchery and madness.

"Completely stupified with the immense quantity of spirit which I had drank, and retaining a confused recollection of what had occurred the previous night, with both hands I raised the bowl to my lips and found it empty. I dashed it to the ground with bitter curses, and then staggered to my companions, both of whom I found upon the floor. On my passing my hand over the face of one of them, I found it besmeared and clotted with

a thick paste; I put my fingers to my lips; it was blood. The effect of this discovery was to sober me greatly. I shuddered at the horrible deed which my companions had undoubtedly committed. I vowed to fulfil my part of the compact also, and seizing the paper I had written overnight, I staggered to my bed-room; my dressing-case was open on the table, and, as I put my hand upon a razor, the bugle sounded for parade: I hesitated but for an instant, and then, taking a looking-glass in my left hand, and the razor in my right, I carefully and deliberately opened this wound, the scar of which I shall wear till death.

"Acute sensations of agony upon the chest were at first felt; and then succeeded violent and tumultuous boundings of the heart, and throbbings of the veins, with griping and convulsive suffocation. For a single moment, a horror of death and a terrible apprehension of futurity overcame me, and I made an attempt to raise my thoughts in supplication to what I scarcely then believed in—the Deity—the endeavour was but a momentary one; my feelings underwent an immediate reaction, and a deep demoniac curse burst from my heart and lips: if my tongue uttered not the words, my soul said, 'If there be a futurity, let

me die and be damned.' All now became thick, tangible blackness, which I could grasp, and then this dreadful darkness was streaked with veins of crimson. I rapidly became insensible.

"It was mid-day before I again felt the faint tinglings of returning life, and much agony and acute nervous suffering did I undergo before I was able to exhibit signs of animation, and faints of long duration frequently occurred. In four or five days from the commission of my suicide I was again upon my legs, but my strength was gone, and my disrelish for life was, if anything, enhanced. I would not express my obligation to the medical man who had preserved my life, and at times I even meditated a repetition of the crime, if crime it really be, so inveterate was my disgust at existence. In a few days, however, these feelings were mitigated, and once more I took my place among a select party of my intimates, from whom I received much attention and kindness: so I began to think it would be as well to try life once again, and I'm heartily glad I did so, for, since that, I have enjoyed many a glorious lark, and have seen a few right jovial ups and downs."

I questioned Howard as to the fate of his companions in this horrible affair.

"Ah, rather a bit of a drama, was it not?" replied he. "Oh, the man over whose bloody face I had run my hand, was a vile impostor: the blood which I had tasted was no noble stream from a life-letting wound, but the worthless outpouring of a fractured proboscis. My two chums were found in a state of utter insensibility, and were well taken care of; but the craven-hearted wretches affected to look upon their solemn vows of that night as a mere drunken frolic, and they appeared to hold me in estimation as an ass, for having fulfilled my part of the compact."

"And do you still," I inquired, "remain in your utter infidelity, after having passed through the scene which you have just depicted?"

"Indeed, yes: that moment of agony, that transient attempt to seek for a God, not only confirmed me in my former atheism, but shut out even the faint doubtings which at intervals had arisen in my mind. Before this I should, perhaps, have called myself a deist, rather than an atheist. I think I did in a manner credit the existence of a sort of supreme agency—I had no thought, no care about it—there might be a Deity, or there might not be. Now, I maintain that, if a Being such as you affect to believe in, having the attri-

butes which you have imputed to your God, had really existed, he would not, he could not, have rejected my momentary appeal and my contrition. No, never. From that moment my disbelief in *such a God* has been stronger than ever."

I was deeply interested in this strange tale, and in the actor himself. I endeavoured to reason with him, and hoped that by leading him on in the argument, I might induce him to read. I offered him "Paley's Natural Theology," and "Evidences of Christianity:" he burst into a hearty fit of laughter. "God bless you, my dear fellow; why I know all those books by heart." I recommended him to read his Bible, as the best reference, but he soon convinced me that he knew much more of its sacred pages than I did; and from the very correct and pertinent quotations which he instantly cited, I saw that he must really have studied it most narrowly. He would not allow me to continue the subject: "Don't bother me now, there's a good fellow," said he; "I want to finish this novel."

During the first week in April, we began to feel a very sensible change in temperature: at noon the sultry heat was attended with a languor and depression, which gave us a tolerable foretaste of

the delights of a tropical climate. Towards sunset I mounted the rigging, and perched myself upon the maintopmast-cross-trees for the enjoyment of the cool evening breeze, which came sweeping over the wide expanse of waters. I had remained for some moments in musing silence, admiring the broad canopy of purple, crimson, and gold, which was stretched across the western horizon, in forms from which the imagination soon constructed a triumphal arch of glory, and through which the burning sun might be supposed to dash, in his headlong career: a faint peal of thunder was heard across the sea!

"Ah! there he goes over his golden bridge," said I.

"Who, sir?" said a voice close to my elbow; but before I could answer, my leg was seized and lashed to the rigging, by a bit of spun-yarn.

"Hallo! my boy, what are you after?" cried I, in some apprehension.

"Wants your footin,' plase your honour."

"Well, my good fellow, undo the leg, and we'll see about it."

"Thank ye, sir," said the fellow, still holding on the rope; "hope your honour won't think a couple of dollars too warm."

I promised him the two dollars, and he unbound me, exacting at the same time a promise that I would endeavour to entice some of the other young gents. into the rigging.

On the 7th of April we came in sight of Peak Teneriffe and the Island of Palma. The clouds had completely obscured the land until we were within ten miles of it, when a fresh breeze most opportunely cleared away the vapours, or at least rolled them to the summit of the mountain island, exposing upon its rocky sides the harsh outlines of deep ravines and broken ground. As we glided past Palma, patches of cultivation were visible upon its steeps, and then we descried the huts of the Spaniards, perched in the shelter of some bold projecting point of red granite, or here and there thrown out in forcible contrast to the dark brown herbage; the stately palm-trees, too, added not a little to the picturesque effect of this pretty island.

We entered the Torrid Zone on the 14th, and found the heat of the climate fully equal to our worst anticipations. No small apprehension was excited among our fair fellow-passengers by some few precautions taken by our Captain against the chance of meeting with a pirate, these being the latitudes mostly infested by such marauders. We

scaled our guns, ground up our cutlasses, prepared wads, and made sundry other arrangements against surprise; the ladies looked on with certain twitterings of dread, and eyed the furbished muskets with dire suspicion.

Flying-fish abound in the tropics; large flights of them, when pursued by their rapacious enemy, the albacore, start into the air, and after flying some three or four hundred yards, are again compelled to take refuge in the water, not only for the purpose of moistening their finny wings, but also to escape the hungry pursuit of the merciless albatross, or the gull: and thus this little fish continues to live through its short existence, which is in truth but one incessant flight from its remorseless persecutors in both elements.

The beautiful little medusa, too, commonly known as the Portuguese man-of-war, is here to be seen in every direction, spreading its gaudy canvass to the breeze; pink, orange-color, and bright blue, are most delicately blended in this wonderful little creature's hull and sails; it raises itself to the surface, by some extraordinary faculty of expanding its varicolored body like a well-stretched bladder, and when it feels the influence of a not too boisterous breeze, it spreads its pretty

sail, and glides with astonishing rapidity over the rippled surface of the ocean. I caught several of them in the lid of an old hamper, attached to a string, but I paid dearly for my curiosity, for the feelers or cables of this little animal possess a property of inflicting a sting, if touched in any part, even for a short time after they are severed from the body. These are seldom the eighth of an inch in thickness, and frequently are found ten or twelve feet in length.

"Oh, la!" said Miss Lavinia Swallow, as she swept forth from the cuddy door, near which I was seated, examining the medusa in a bucket of water, "what a pretty little creature!"—We were unacquainted, be it remembered—I, however, saw that the coast was clear, and with my most winning bow, prepared to introduce myself, begging the elegant Lavinia to come and take a nearer look at the little beauty.

"How funny!" said Miss Lavinia, "Will it bite, sir?" Conversation once broached, it was easy to improve the opportunity, and from flying-fish and medusas, I ventured to turn the talk to something more particular.

"Is it true, Miss Lavinia, that your cruel papa has determined to keep us perfect strangers till the

end of the voyage? are we really to be tantalized by seeing your pretty faces, and never hearing your sweet voices? I trust you will be able to dissuade him from this harsh resolution: do try, will you?"

"La! that's all stuff and nonsense in pa, and it will be your own faults if you chuse to mind what he says. How can he prevent your talking to us? You can talk if you like, surely?"

"But you will condescend to listen, Miss Lavinia?"

"Oh yes, to be sure; why should not we?—As I told Virginia Letitia, the other day, we've got nothing to do but fight through the first of it, and he'll soon get tired of scolding."

"But I hope we shall not seriously anger your papa, by indulging in a little occasional conversation; from that, you know, we may get on to a game of chess or backgammon, and so on."

"Oh, to be sure; but then pa's so passionate—"

"Lavinia! Lavinia!" shouted old Swallow from the poop, just over our heads; "what are you doing there? You know you have no business on deck by yourself!" Away flew the young lady, and I went upon the poop to render an explanation, if possible, to the papa; but he would listen

to no apologies, and it was evident that no acquaintance with his daughters would be formed with his sanction; so I determined to take the young lady's advice, and not consult his wishes upon the subject.

At dinner, the same day, soup-plates had just been removed from the table, when I cleared my voice, and stretching my head well forward to get a peep at my fair confederate, who sat at the further end of the table, I startled the whole company, by begging Miss Lavinia Swallow to do me the felicity of taking wine with me. The buz of conversation was immediately hushed, and all eyes were upon me.

"What wine will you take, Miss Lavinia?"

"White wine if you please, sir."

"Steward, a glass of Sauterne for Miss Lavinia Swallow."

The steward smiled and handed the wine, and as I bowed to the sweet Lavinia, I saw old Swallow and his wife looking daggers at me for my impertinence. The joke did not stop here; all the young fellows at our bachelor end of the table followed the cue; my friend Howard challenged the fascinating Virginia Letitia, and the rest carried it round. The consequence of this was,

that I was accused and brought to trial, as the ringleader in a conspiracy set on foot for the purpose of breaking down the barrier placed between us and the girls. This sally, however, brought the Captain upon our side of the house, for he loved a joke.

During the 17th and 18th of May, a distant sail had been seen upon our starboard quarter, standing the same course with ourselves; and from the circumstance of her position being always the same, we could only conclude that she was steering by us, for she continued to preserve, both in light and fresh breezes, the same distance, as a mere speck upon the horizon, so that it was impossible to make her out. The suspicions of the Captain were awakened by her continuing to hover thus perseveringly about our wake; the magazine was overhauled, and the ship's cutlasses and muskets were passed once more through the armourer's hands; however, it was not thought necessary to remount the guns, which had been stowed away only the previous day.

In the evening, I was writing in my cabin, when Tom, the little cabin-boy, came running in. "Sir, sir, there's a great ship coming down to us, to fight us; there's the Captain and officers

and all the passengers upon the poop, with their glasses, and they all think she is a pirate ship."

I took my telescope, and ran on deck, and there, as the boy had said, were all the people anxiously reconnoitring the stranger, who was bearing directly down upon us. It was getting dark, and the vessel was at too great a distance for any but a sailor's eye to determine what she was.

"What do you make of her, Mr. Harcourt?" asked the Captain of the chief mate.

"She's a schooner, sir, and a rakish little craft she is too; in my mind no better than she should be."

"Faith, and there may be some truth in that," replied the skipper. "Let's have the guns on deck smartly, Mr. Harcourt, and tell Macaulay and the steward to stand by the magazine. Carpenter, knock out the ports!"

Considerable excitement now prevailed on board; every hand was actively engaged in preparation. It was evident that the Captain anticipated a bit of a skrimmage; for except while superintending the work on deck, his eye was anxiously fixed upon the movements of the stranger. She was nearing us rapidly, and every

spar and every rope quickly became visible in relief against the clear sky.

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "if we are obliged to grapple that little devil, there will be no child's-play for us; you all know what hands such as she are manned by. I don't want to preach to you, my lads; I put too much confidence in every man of you to think that you require to be talked into your duty—it is enough that you are British seamen. Boatswain, pipe all hands to splice the main-brace!"*

The little craft was now within hail; not a soul was to be seen on board, except the man at the wheel. She really appeared to manœuvre as if by magic, as she came sweeping down upon us, now luffing to the wind, now again lying off a point or two, as if to shew her superiority of sailing. Now, like a little water-witch, the most perfect model of symmetry and grace, she came skimming over the waters but a stone's-throw to windward of us. Our captain hailed her, but she made us no reply; again, but with as little effect: once more, but she still persisted in her obstinate silence. He now threatened to fire into her if she did not reply, and up started a figure,

* Nautical phrase, signifying to receive an extra glass of grog.

trumpet in hand, who answered our hail by a loud incomprehensible sort of a grunt, and again she steered wide of us. As she fell off from us, she wore round upon the wind, as if with the intention of bringing her broadside to rake our decks from the stern forwards: our skipper, however, was a little too wide awake for her, and wore ship also, before the manœuvre had time to take effect, so that we were again standing the same course; but we were now upon the windward side, an advantage which the schooner had hitherto enjoyed. Finding herself foiled, she now went off at a tangent before the wind, and was quickly lost sight of in the increasing gloom.

"She's not gone yet," said the Captain; "lay the ship her course again, Mr. Harcourt; she'll be down upon us again directly. But, eh! how's this? why the ladies are all in the cuddy; they had better go below. See to that, Mr. Harcourt: I'll keep an eye on deck."

Now let us take a peep fore and aft the decks. All the more combative among the passengers were assembled upon the poop, armed to the teeth with fowling-pieces, regimental swords, ship's muskets, boarding-pikes, and cutlasses. I had taken my station upon the larboard bumpkin-

boom, with my doubled-barrelled Joe, having been commissioned by the Captain to reserve my fire in order to pick off the stranger's helmsman, if an opportunity should occur. The quarter-deck, waist, and forecastle were crowded with all the able hands on board. The capstern was surrounded with ammunition and small arms, and all the shot-lockers were well furnished. The sailors appointed to man the guns stood by them, anxiously awaiting an opportunity of displaying their skill; the musketeers occupied the intervals between the guns, and at the gangway stood, with his shirt sleeves tucked up above his elbows, our gigantic immolating priest, Tom Kitts, the butcher, brandishing a red-hot poker, wherewith to fire the guns: not a port-fire was to be found on board.

It will be understood that the schooner having gone off before the wind, and we now lying our course with the wind upon our larboard quarter, the two vessels were supposed to be sailing in directions diverging from one another. It was to our utter astonishment, therefore, that the watch upon the forecastle descried the little witch coming down directly across our course, and not a hundred yards a-head of us; it could be no other? no! there she was, the same little rakish gull-like

craft, sweeping along under a press of canvass, and impudently running under our very bows.

"Port your helm!" roared the Captain to the man at the wheel; "why that lubber is determined to make us run her down; but, by the mighty Jove, I'll not lay a point off my course for her again. Steady!"

"Steady she is, sir," replied the helmsman.

The schooner again tried the same manœuvre as before, but our captain was too keen to be outwitted, and as she brought her broadside upon our quarter, we again wore round, so as to keep her on our beam. Finding that she had gained nothing, she did not attempt any renewal of this manœuvre; but filling again her towering canvass, she passed a-head, and once more crossed our bows, so close, indeed, that our flying jib-boom was reported to have carried away her peak halliards: for our skipper kept his word, declaring that he would run her down rather than break off his course again. We entreated him to fire into her for her insolence; but he declared he dared not do it.

"I would," said he, "if I dared, but such a thing would subject me to the loss of my command; besides, remember how many petticoats I have

under my charge: if we were to get the worst of the fray, a very pretty pickle I should bring these young girls into: the most fortunate of them would have their throats cut, and the rest, the fattest of course, would be led in captivity to the harem of the Dey of Algiers. Do you think, Miss Virginia Letitia Swallow would ever survive the honour of being made a sultana? No, my dear fellows; if he hits me, I'll fight; but I dare not strike the first blow."

Once more, she hauled her wind, and sailed clean round us, still refusing to answer our repeated hail; well might she have been proud of her superior sailing; but she did not venture to compete with us in force. I fancy she was too well satisfied with her scrutiny, for as she ran to leeward of us, she put herself before the wind, and once more took her departure.

"Ah, ah!" cried the captain, "that is the last of her," as the rising moon displayed to us her rigging, decks, and bulwarks literally swarming with human beings. "She's off!" repeated the captain, "or she would never have shewn her bee-hive. Why, they mustered full two hundred hands, I'll be sworn. I'm very glad she has walked off; let us go down and crush the hopes of the aspiring sultanas."

"Well, Adams," said I to an old man-of-war's "man, what do you think of her? I hardly fancied that she would display such a craven crest. Do you think we should have been a match for her?"

"No saying exactly, sir; she's a proper tight little craft as a sailor might love to look upon, and carries a 'nation lot of hands; regular fire-eaters too, every man jack of 'em, I'll be sworn; but then they never show fight unless it's a dead thing; she see'd too many hands aboard of us, and didn't quite like our skipper's cool way of working; besides, she didn't twig no quakers* among our bull-dogs, and may be, it's the better for both of us that she didn't, your honour."

"But a couple of broadsides would have cut her up fore and aft, and a third would have sunk her."

"Don't know that, sir; them 'ere sort of craft ain't quite so easy done up; you might riddle her hull through and through like an old cullender, before she'd die of the dropsy."

In the cuddy, I found the ladies just recovering from their terrors and faintings. It was amusing to note the different expressions depicted on the

* Imitation cannon, made of wood.

various faces around the table. All the ladies, and steady-going, middle-aged gents, were grinning with delight; while all the young hands, and those who had nothing to lose, wore a look of chagrin upon their lately-excited countenances, which told how heartily they would have enjoyed a bit of a skrimmage. Mr. Swallow was capering about, kissing his wife and daughters round and round, and the elegant Lavinia was bathing her own temples with eau de Cologne.

"Come, come, Swallow," said Howard, "that's enough, in all conscience; pray let Miss Virginia alone; it's positively cruel to set all our mouths watering in this way; I'd just as soon be Ixion or Tantalus as stand here only a looker-on. Why, if those dastardly poltroons would but have come to the scratch instead of giving us leg-bail, I might have had an opportunity of doing the ladies a service; and their gratitude, I'm sure, would have prompted a handsome reward."

Swallow could not tolerate this free-and-easy sort of rattle before his girls; he grunted out an obscure something, about Howard's being sufficiently notorious already; and stealing round the table he took his seat in a corner chair, effectually cutting off all communication with the end of the

cuddy, where the Misses Swallow were seated, for on the opposite side sat Mrs. Swallow, keeping watch also. Having wiped and adjusted his spectacles, the old gentleman took up his book, and commenced reading; I went up to him.

"Mr. Swallow, I'm very sorry to disturb you, but oblige me by permitting me to pass." The old gentleman took off his spectacles, and stared me in the face, exclaiming,

"It is usual, sir, for the young gentlemen to take their seats at the other end of the table."

I took no notice of his reply, but added, "Or, perhaps, sir, you will have the goodness to hand me that book lying in the scuttle?" Of course no objection could be made to this request, and in rising to fetch the book, our friend Swallow left his post unguarded, of which Howard and I immediately took advantage, and seated ourselves in two vacant chairs knowingly kept between them by our fair confederates.

Old Swallow flushed purple with impotent wrath, and his fond spouse was seen to bite her pouting lip with excessive ire, but neither of them ventured to remonstrate. The papa doggedly retook his chair, and again adjusted his specs, though his reading appeared to be entirely upon one page.

I proposed to give Lavinia a lesson in chess, and Howard engaged Virginia in a game of écarté.

My fair adversary, taking a white pawn in one of her pretty little fat hands and a red one in the other, put both under the table for me to choose from, instead of which I was detaining one of them a prisoner, and endeavouring to rob it of a pretty little forget-me-not ring. I had nearly succeeded, when the hand was suddenly withdrawn, and a mantling blush assured me that we were undergoing a scrutinizing glance from the papa. As I faced him, he withdrew his angry look; but it was instantly darted at Howard and his pretty opponent.

"I propose," cried Howard.

"Well, that's plump and plain," responded the young lady, "could you not have said, 'With your permission, Miss Virginia Letitia Swallow, I beg to propose.'" Howard repeated her words.

"Are you serious?" asked she.

"My life depends on it."

"Then I—I—yes, I will accept, though 'tis only in pure compassion, for I'm sure your hand is worth nothing, and I hold a flush of trumps; see, I cast away two hearts, and hearts are trumps."

"You are a most obliging little divinity," re-

joined the gentleman, "and, were I still a bachelor, my own heart should be cast at your feet, and I would propose in good earnest. See, the queen takes the knave."

"Aye, and beats him too, in most games," retorted the tittering Virginia. Here good Swallow, senior, with impatient gesture and flashing eye, threw himself back in his chair, and cramming his hands deep into his pockets, was about to fire off a reprimand at his daughter, when his attention was again attracted towards Lavinia and myself. Of this I had notice given me by the timid girl putting her pretty little sandal'd foot upon mine, with a gentle admonitory pressure and a sly contraction of the brow, which, though scarcely perceptible, spoke plainly enough, "Stop! he's listening." I was certainly launching out a little at the time.

"But remember, Miss Lavinia," I was saying, "we shall part in Calcutta; do let me steal that little forget-me-not; it will remind me of the pretty hand that wore it, and of the soft cheek which has so often pressed it; besides there is"—the delicate little foot was still pressing me to desist, but I knew all this had been spoken too carefully *sotto voce* to have been

overheard: our looks, I fancy, startled the solicitous parent.

"You have *checked* me just in time to avert the crisis, Miss Lavinia; had you delayed a moment longer, I should have had it all my own way."

"No, my lovely one"—was heard from the other party.

"Mr. Howard!" roared poor old Swallow, in a towering burst of passion, "I will not suffer your unparalleled insolence a moment longer; how dare you, sir, venture to address such language to my daughter? Go to your cabin this instant, Virginia."

"Oh, do allow us to play out this trick first, sir," said Howard, coolly; "you are under a mistake, I do assure you—your daughter has such a beautiful hand, it will be a treat to be beaten by such a hand—you quite misconceived me, I can aver, my good sir."

"This trick! sir, what do you mean? No, sir, you have been playing your tricks long enough, and I insist upon it, sir, that — "

"Excuse me, Mr. Swallow, but really you are making a great fuss all about nothing: do allow me to explain. I was only —"

"You were only, sir! yes, sir, you were only —"

"Now, Mr. Swal—"

"I want no explanation, sir: I heard the words you made use of; and depend upon it, sir, you shall be chastised for your insolence. Go to your cabin, I tell you, Virginia—you are as much to blame as Mr. Howard. I will leave this affair for the decision of the Captain, and I shall insist upon it that he takes measures to prevent any of you young men from forcing your society upon those who are anxious to avoid it."

"I at least have never done so, sir; the young ladies have fortunately too much good taste to be indifferent to a gentleman's society, and I am sure you cannot complain that I have ever overburdened you with my conversation."

The Captain, who had been upon the poop, hearing this loud and hot discussion, came in to put an end to further controversy.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "this is very unpleasant; what is amiss?"

"Amiss, Captain! why every thing is amiss when young men can dare to behave in this insolent manner. Mr. Howard has insulted my daughter most grossly, sir, and I look to you, not only

to prevent the recurrence of such conduct, but also in your office, as a civil magistrate afloat, to bring the young scoundrel to an account for his temerity."

"Easy, easy, my dear sir; let me hear the nature of Mr. Howard's offence, and then—"

"Why, sir, he has been using the most indelicate freedom of speech to my daughter Virginia."

"Mr. Swallow, excuse me: I can assure you in the most—"

"Stop, sir; don't perjure yourself; do you dare to deny it? I pledge you my sacred word of honour, Captain, that I heard the young puppy call Virginia 'my lovely one.'"

"Indeed, sir, you are mistaken."

"I am not mistaken, you rascal," resumed the old man, his whole frame trembling with excessive passion; "do you give me the lie?"

"You would almost deserve it, sir, for your intemperate obstinacy. If you will not hear me, allow the Captain to question Miss Virginia upon the subject."

The fair Virginia was sent for, and the question put: "Pray, Miss Virginia, did Mr. Howard, while playing écarté with you, address you by any impertinent term of endearment?"

" No, Captain, he did not."

" He did, you slut; I heard him make use of the words 'my lovely one,' to you."

" Stop, Mr. Swallow; the affair is now in my hands."

" What papa has said is quite true, Captain; Mr. Howard did make use of the words which pa is so angry about; but they were spoken in reference to Mr. Howard's own wife."

" Mr. Howard's wife!" exclaimed unanimously the whole company. " What, are you married, Howard?"

" Yes, I am, and my wife is in England. I was telling Miss Virginia an anecdote of my good lady, when Mr. Swallow rudely—"

" Ah, I see how it is," said the Captain. " You are satisfied, I hope, Mr. Swallow."

" Mr. Howard, if it be really so," said the old man, " I readily beg your forgiveness for my intemperate language."

This honest concession put an immediate stop to all further hostilities; though, upon more deliberate consideration, Swallow certainly became suspicious of the veracity of Howard's story; more particularly as the man had hitherto been looked upon as a bachelor during the whole voyage, and

no previous allusion to his marriage had ever escaped him.

It was a quiet moonlight night, and after the ladies had withdrawn from the cuddy, Howard and I walked out on deck. I put a question to him touching his marriage, and he volunteered the following history of the affair. For secresy sake, we ascended to the cross-trees, and having comfortably settled ourselves upon our lofty perch, Howard commenced his tale.

CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE, A TAKE-IN ON BOTH SIDES.

"On my return to England, after four years' slavery in India, I found my family rusticating in the vicinity of a small watering-place, instead of living, as I had known them, in all the gay doings of the West-end of Town. My sisters—the two pretty ones at least—had fetched their price in the London market, and as there was no chance that the one left upon the shelf would ever be disposed of, my prudent parents had sought a rustic home, for the sake of husbanding the scanty remnants of a once ample income. This dull secluded sort of life was anything but palatable to me, as you may guess; so I speedily framed an excuse for visiting the metropolis. There I soon found out some of my old friends, and among others was warmly received by Lady A., a gay widow, somewhat past her prime, but retaining traces of former beauty.

"A few days after my arrival in town, I received an invitation to a fête at Lady A.'s. Every thing was in the first style; the room magnificently furnished, and brilliantly attended by a crowd of exclusives. The first person who particularly attracted my attention was a lady, sitting upon the left of our hostess. She was, indeed, a lovely and most striking woman; she was attired in deep mourning, and her simple, but at the same time rich costume, was beautifully contrasted with the elaborately gay attire of the lady next her.

"So completely was my admiration fixed by this lady, that I hesitated in my manner as I approached to pay my *devoirs* to the lady of the mansion. Lady A. received me most cordially, and immediately introduced me to her companion as an old and valued friend, and then moving to another part of the room, she left me to entertain the beauty. I do not know that she could strictly be called beautiful; she was in every respect comely, but it was the eye which gave such a magical witchery to the countenance. I never before had seen such eyes: they were those long, dark, flashing, yet languishing eyes, which tell all that they are told to say, in infinitely more touching language than tongue was ever schooled

to; her hair was of that dark brown so nearly black, and, in keeping with the simplicity of her costume, was dressed *à la vierge;* her figure was somewhat of the tallest, but perfectly elegant and easy; and then the foot--oh! such a foot—was peeping from the flowing gown, now extended, now withdrawn; she herself could not help casting an occasional glance of admiration at it; words could not have spoken more plainly, 'find me its equal!'

"'I had formerly the pleasure, Captain Howard, of an acquaintance with your family and sisters, but lately I have heard nothing of them.'

"I explained that they had retired into the country, and then again looked silently down at her pretty foot; it was protruded a *very little* further from the dress, and the slender fingers slyly and under cover of the embroidered handkerchief, drew the skirt *a thought* higher up the ankle; an ankle that Venus herself would have envied. She evidently observed the impression which she had made, but I was not the boy to be long taken aback, and quickly began to exert myself for her amusement. It is not for me to say that I was successful; but when I asked her to dance, she replied, 'I have already declined several requests; however, my head-ache is some-

what better, now: but I detest quadrilles; we will waltz.'

"I will say nothing of how my cheek flushed and my heart bounded, as I supported my partner through the circling mazes of the waltz; I don't know whether my brain whirled most with intoxicating love, or the giddy dance. After handing the lady to her carriage, having dangled in her train all night, I mentally exclaimed, 'Well, I little thought that I should ever be inclined to wed; but, if devotion, stratagem, or compulsion, can make that woman Mrs. Howard, why Mrs. Howard she shall be: that is, if she has any money of her own—ten thousand would do; ay, or five, with such a foot and ankle as that: if she has nothing, why of course it is out of the question: couldn't even afford a cab to take her to church.' I hastened back to the half-deserted rooms to bid adieu to our hostess.

"'Well, my young friend,' said she, 'is not Mrs. M. a sweet young creature?'

"'Oh! an angel! Has she any fortune?'

"'Twenty-five thousand, and in her own right,' whispered Lady A.

"'She's a perfect little divinity!'

"I had obtained my syren's address, with per-

mission to call the next day; and one o'clock found me, with a nervous hand and heightened colour, vainly endeavouring to please myself at my toilet. ' 'Tis true,' thought I, ' the twenty-five thousand may depend upon the tying of this cravat;' so, after soiling half a dozen, I became desperate, and screwed it up anyhow, in a state of nervous anxiety and excitement, for which there was no occasion. I was just sallying forth from my door, to walk to the residence of my fair inamorata in Cavendish-square, when Lady A.'s carriage drove up, and the servant handed me a three-cornered pink note. What a bore, thought I, half aloud, as I commenced reading:

" ' My dear Captain Howard,

" ' I know you are very seldom disengaged, but if you do happen to be at leisure, pray jump into my barouche. I am going shopping, and want your judgment upon some India shawls.

" ' In haste, &c. ' Louisa A.

" ' Tell your mistress that you met me from home, that I regret I am unable to attend her, being engaged upon most urgent business.' While giving this message, I was folding up the embroidered

* Military phrase, applied to the first works in laying siege to a fortress.

note, and discovered the following brief P.S.: 'Mrs. M. is with me.' I cut short my speech, ordered the servant to open the carriage-door, jumped in, and in a fever of expectation, gave the man his order, home.

"With just sufficient leisure to build a whole city of castles, I arrived at Belgrave Square: taking three steps at a stride, I was quickly in the presence of the two widows. I entered unannounced, and my own name was the first word which fell upon my ear. My abrupt *entrée* somewhat disconcerted them for a moment.

" 'Ah, Captain Howard,' exclaimed Lady A.; this is really kind of you: here are we two forlorn widows obliged to beg for a beau. I was apprehensive too that some other engagement might have debarred me the pleasure of your society.' This was said with an arched brow, and a slight shrug, which shewed she knew whither I had been engaged. Of course I assured her ladyship that no engagement could possibly interfere with my obedience to her commands. A look from the other lady said, 'Faithless fellow! you were to have called on me.' Here was a pretty scrape; however, no explanation could be made, and away we went to the shawl merchants. With

increasing intimacy, I gained confidence, and did not at all despair of ultimately succeeding to the pretty little white hand and twenty-five thousand. Lady A.'s assurances were most encouraging, and besides she warranted the validity of the fortune.

"It is not to be supposed that I was the only suitor for the hand of this sweet lady and her cash—four or five other followers had enlisted in her train; but I had too much vanity, and too much encouragement from Lady A. to distress myself about them individually, although so circumstanced as to be apprehensive of crushing all my own fair projects through want of time to bring them to a head.

"In order to follow the pursuit with a prospect of success, I had deemed it expedient to live in better style than I had the means of supporting, and upon the chance of the twenty-five thousand, I had been induced to run into all kinds of extravagances. My creditors, finding that they could obtain nothing better than promises from me, became exceedingly clamorous, and it was evident that if I did not quickly petition my beauty, the field would be left open to my rivals by my removal to the King's-bench. In this dilemma, I wrote to

* Military phrase; Method of approach in besieging a fortress.

my father, explaining my speculations, and humbly confessing my present difficulties: in reply, I received a hearty congratulation, and a draft on his banker for £500, which the generous old gentleman hoped would not only cover all my debts, but enable me to sport a little in pursuit of the widow; he little thought that his remittance would be as a mere drop in the ocean of my debts. It certainly quieted the clamours of my creditors for a time, and enabled me to run up a longer score of credit on the strength of a little more display: but the shallowness of my resources was soon discovered; and at last, in order to avoid the interior of a sponging-house, I saw it was positively necessary to win my beautiful enslaver, and her twenty-five thousand, at once, or give leg-bail to my creditors; and although I felt everything but confident of the issue, I determined to try my fortune at once.

"The day that was to decide my fate was ushered in with one of those dense yellow fogs, the atmosphere of link-boys, and the bane of gas-contractors; a fog in which a spoon would stand upright, and in breathing which a hungry man may fancy that he is swallowing a hearty mess of smoked pea-soup. The weather alone was sufficient

to damp a man's ardour, and I was sadly inclined to look upon the dark side of my undertaking.

"As I approached Cavendish Square, my heart rose to my mouth, and I could not help foreboding that all my lofty castles were destined that day to be dashed to the ground. The streets were greasy and slippery, and in turning the corner of Holles Street, my foot slipt off the rounded edge of the pavement, and down I came plump in the mud. Here was a pickle for a lover going in form to pop the awful question; besides, this was my only Stultz fit to wear. I was fully convinced that my evil star presided that day, and having got a wipe down at Bull and Churton's, I determined to postpone my visit until the morrow. I turned back, and on arrival at my lodgings, found the door surrounded by a multitude of tradesmen and duns, rendering it necessary that I should avoid placing my person in their vicinity, if I wished to continue at large. I therefore turned off in the direction of Belgrave Square, with a resolution to explain my uncomfortabl eposition to my friend Lady A., and to beg her advice and assistance.

"It was in no very enviable mood that I arrived at Belgrave Square, and gave an angry summons to the porter. I was admitted, and hastened up

stairs, unannounced, being told that her ladyship was alone. At the drawing-room door, however, I made a sudden halt, for to my utter astonishment, a man's voice, in loud and passionate entreaty, was audible within. I turned into the adjoining room to await the lady's leisure, having despatched a servant for another suit of raiment; here, however, I found that in consequence of the folding doors, every word spoken in the next room was plainly heard, and on this account I was about to shift my quarters, when I caught a few words from a voice never to be mistaken by me, and which instantly awakened all the evil passions of my soul—jealousy and revenge were uppermost, and I advanced to the door for the purpose of interrupting the *tête-à-tête,* when my attention was fixed by what was passing within.

"'Now oblige me by rising,' said the lady; 'I cannot suffer you to continue in that attitude; we shall be interrupted presently. Get up, sir; I tell you I will not answer your question.'

"'Dearest Mrs. Monk, tell me, is it Howard? Remember, he must soon be returning to India; surely you would never think of burying those angelic charms in a land of cholera and cobra-de-capellas; you would not squander that exquisite

refinement and finish upon the demi-barbarous society of those pestilential climes: only tell me if it be he, that I may fly to destroy him for his infamous presumption!'

"'I tell, you, sir, I will answer you no questions. By what right, sir, do you dare to catechise me? You had better get up now; I am growing seriously angry, and will positively cut off this fine treasured whisker if you do not rise.' The threat appeared to take effect.

"'And now Mr. Brown,' cried the lady, 'I shall feel obliged if you will take your leave. Let me once more assure you that your addresses are an annoyance to me, much as you flatter me. Now, sir, depart, I pray you, or I shall not keep civil terms with you much longer.'

"'But, my dear madam, you asked me what I had to offer in return for your lovely person and the £25,000. I do solemnly assure you I had not the remotest idea that you had still so large a fortune; I had heard rumours that you had liberally spent or given away the greater part of your estate. You must be well aware, madam, that avarice forms no part of my character.'

"'Indeed, Mr. Brown, I cannot and will not be detained with a recital of your good or bad quali-

ties. I am alike indifferent to both. If you do not take your leave forthwith, I shall be apt to consider you unworthy of the delicacy with which I have hitherto treated you.'

"'Nay, now, peace, I pray you. If I could but convince you of my devotion—surely if poverty be an objection, it must apply equally to Howard as to myself. The pay of a captain in the Indian army is but a bare pittance: besides, I have heard it whispered that Howard is no captain after all, but that he holds the exalted rank of ensign in a regiment of Native Infantry, upon a salary of about a hundred a-year.'

"'But, sir, I can assure you, that Howard *is* a captain. I met a friend of his, a major in his corps, who assured me that he was what they call a *pucka* captain, that is, without brevet rank, and holding a company, which is more fortunate promotion than falls to the lot of every young man in the army in these days: his pay, I am told, is in excess of £600 a-year. This I only mention in justice to Captain Howard, and not because I have any interest in him beyond that of a passing acquaintance.'

"'You have said enough, madam: the warmth of your manner tells me who is my rival. Adieu!

madam; trust me you shall shortly hear of your slave, Captain Howard.'

"Brown made his exit at the staircase door as I slipt in at the other. The lady's back was towards me, and as I entered noiselessly, she did not turn, or appear to be aware of my presence. For an instant I thought that I caught a glance of her eye in the opposite mirror, but I again fancied that I must have been mistaken, when I heard a deep sigh from the fair one, and 'Poor Howard! I fear I have treated him very capriciously; I wish he would call,'—uttered in a scarcely audible voice. In a moment I was at her feet—popped—and was accepted. I begged for a speedy solemnization; my beauty said a month; but I pleaded hard, and a week from that day was ultimately fixed upon. Pretty sharp work, certainly; but we had mutually an utter contempt of any thing slow.

"Although I swore that I was perfectly indifferent to anything like money matters in the business, still the lady insisted upon it that her attorney should explain to me the position of her affairs; and truly the little man shewed me a power of parchment, and a balance sheet of some £30,000 on the right side; the documents of the

£25,000 being too clear to be misunderstood. Mr. Murphy agreed to silence my creditors for me, although he was sorry that he could only supply them with promises at present, as it would be an incalculable loss to touch even a fraction of Mrs. M.'s fortune just at the present moment; the whole of it being embarked in speculations, upon which it would entail positive ruin if a sixpence were withdrawn. Of course I did not care, as long as they were silent, whether my creditors were paid in cash or promises.

"The wedding was to be *very quiet*, at the request of the lady, a stipulation to which I was unwillingly compelled to accede. Lady A., and a very few of our more immediate intimates, were alone to be present at the ceremony. All preliminaries had been comfortably arranged, and on the critical morning I went to Cavendish Square in a handsome job chariot, at nine o'clock. On entering the breakfast parlour I was politely and cheerfully greeted by Murphy the attorney with a shower of congratulations; and while listening to the little man's encomiums most lavishly bestowed upon my charming, and amiable, and accomplished, and beautiful, and brilliant, and fascinating bride, the lady herself entered, most

tastefully arrayed in a bridal robe of white satin, trimmed with blond. Though paler than usual, she was more lovely than ever, and I involuntarily said in my heart, 'Happy dog! should I be even without the twenty-five thousand.'

" 'Ah! my Howard,' said she, 'you look handsomer than ever. Stay; that left moustache—that will do. Dear Lady A. has a wretched side-ache this morning, and is unable to leave her chamber. How very provoking that I should be deprived of her kind support on such an occasion as this! However, we will allow nothing to damp our spirits to-day. The two Misses Anderson have also sent excuses for themselves and their mamma; they have this moment received tidings of the death of a near relation, and of course we could not expect them; though I think they might have sealed up the letter again, and have allowed it to remain upon the mantel-piece until the evening. This is really unfortunate; but never mind, my Howard, we will be all in all to one another.'

" 'Yes, my sweet. Mr. Murphy then will be the only friend present at the wedding?'

" 'Why, yes, love, and must give me away. It is very annoying to be thus disappointed by all our friends, but we shall be just as well married

without them. James, you know, can be second witness.'

"After the celebration of our nuptials, all went on as happily as heart could wish, for the first few weeks. My creditors had for a time lost sight of me, but I was again scented out; duns followed upon duns; promises would go no further. I determined, therefore, to apply to my devoted wife, who I knew would refuse me nothing, and to explain to her the extremity of my situation. I seized a handful of bills, and ascending to her dressing-room, I entered with as unconcerned a brow as possible, thinking it best to make light of the matter at first.

"Mrs. H. was sitting before the cheval glass in—— but I will not introduce you into her sanctum. An amiable honeymoon smile greeted me on my entrance; but the expression of her face changed, as she caught a glimpse of the red lines and figures of the papers I held in my hand.

" 'Now, Howard, why do you enter my room without knocking? Really this visit is very unseasonable; oblige me by leaving the room.'

" 'Why, my pretty one, what is the matter? You never chid me before; and I have been in

your dressing-room a hundred times without knocking.'

" 'I tell you, I won't permit it. I beg you will leave me!'

" 'Certainly, my love; but as I am here, I may as well mention what I came for; here is—'

" 'Captain Howard, did you understand me? do you mean to go, sir, or must I return to my bed-room? how do you know my—'

" 'Well, my sweet girl, don't be angry; I'm off!'

"Mrs. Howard, it appeared, was too much indisposed to come down to breakfast this morning, so I carried some up stairs to her myself, and with a gentle tap at the door, 'My love, may I come in?'

" 'Not just now, my dear Howard. What do you want?'

" 'I have brought you up some breakfast.'

" 'Thank you, love; Smith will take it of you; but I cannot see you just now.'

"Foiled again, I saw that I must await the lady's pleasure, as all good husbands should. In the course of the morning, however, Mrs. H. made her appearance, all smiles and good-humour, much to my relief. 'Well, my Charles,' said she,

what did you want? It was very naughty of you to enter my room without knocking; but of course you did not know—I'm sorry I spoke so cross to you, love; what did you want?'

"'Oh, nothing, my sweet girl, I thank you; only I have been dunned by these infernal creditors till I'm almost mad. However, it's not much, my love; it won't put you to any inconvenience: here is a bill for three fifties, and there are half a dozen others for about the same amount, some less, some more, which I know you will readily—'

"'Oh, don't mention it, my love; certainly Murphy must supply you with whatever is necessary.'

"'My love, Murphy declares he cannot, at any sacrifice, touch a single sixpence of your money until the next commercial year, as it is all involved in speculations, from which he cannot withdraw any portion of it. To tell you the truth, I am suspicious of that man; he is too obsequious and cringing to be trusted, and yet you appear to know nothing at all about your own money matters. Promises won't do any longer; cash I must have, to stop the hands of these insatiate jackals, or I shall be walked off to the King's Bench before I am twelve hours older.

Why, at this moment, the door is surrounded by a whole host of these vile harpies, who vow either to have payment of their claims, or to execute the writs with which they are furnished. Now, madam, you must either come down with the cash at once, or I must make your jewels and *bijouterie* answer my purpose until cash can be got on loan or mortgage.'

"'But, my love, Murphy has written—'

"'Murphy be—'

"'Well, Howard, it appears then that the game is up, and the best thing we can do now is to get clear out of this as quickly as possible; and as the demands against you seem to be serious, we had better be off to India at once.'

"'India! what with £30,000 in the treasury? Thank ye, Mrs. Howard; but you're joking, surely. Come now, talk sense; let me set some respectable man at work to see what Murphy is doing with all this money; and then these paltry debts of mine can be discharged, and we may live comfortably enough upon the property if we sink it. Why, the whole of my debts don't amount to more than £3,000 or £5,000.'

"'Well, I see how it is, Howard; and, as I said before, the game is now fairly up—I may

as well say it plainly—I have not a penny in the world.'

" 'Fire and furies, Mrs. Howard! then what the devil were those parchments which I saw? Nay, now, you are joking with me.'

" 'No, Howard, what I have said is too true. *I had* £25,000, and have gambled and squandered away not only all of that, but £6,000 more, to which amount I am now in debt, without a hope of liquidation.'

" 'Well, curse your impudence! But, tell me, madam, what, in the name of all that is ridiculous, could have induced you to bestow yourself upon a poor penniless wretch like me?'

" 'Why, you know, my dear, that your rank of captain in the Bengal army, and your pay, some five or six hundred a-year, will always keep me respectable, which I fear would hardly have been the case had I been left much longer upon my own resources.'

" 'Ha! ha! ha! Captain! five or six hundred a year!! Excellent!!! Well, thank God, I am even with you there. Why, my darling, I am third ensign of my regiment; and as for the five or six hundred, I *ought to have* certainly about a hundred and seventy; but unfortunately

one-half of it is forestalled by the Military Court of Requests, for the benefit of my creditors in India.'

" An eloquent pause——

" 'Howard,' resumed the lady, 'we are both fairly punished. No reproaches, now; you see how matters stand; now do you not agree with me, that the wisest thing to be done is to forget, if possible, this unfortunate marriage? It would be childish to quarrel, but let us part forthwith; I will find means of quitting London, and probably England too. You had better be off to India as speedily as possible. Eh? what say you?'

" 'With all my heart, my lovely one; now you are really a sensible woman: I will but send for my dear friend Murphy, and pay him the balance in his favour. I'm not angry with you, love, but I must wipe off all scores with that hypocrite Murphy; my other debts must stand over.'

" 'You can't pay him, Howard; here is his P.P.C.'

" 'My dear Madam:

" 'We are blown beyond redemption; so I have only time to give you warning to quit town as precipitately as I have done. Many thanks for past favours. Your's ever obediently,

" 'HUMPHREY MURPHY.'

"'So! then fare you well, my love. One kiss; there, 'tis a pretty thing, and I pity it. Good bye.'

"I made my exit by the fire-escape, and walked over ten or twelve houses before I could find a door open. I was a stranger to the inhabitants, but I determined to risk a passage, and entered. On the second floor I met a servant, who was not a little surprised at falling in with a visitor from the garrets; and doubtless he would have disputed my further progress, had not his hands been fortunately well occupied in bearing a weighty tiffin tray, loaded with sundry smoking viands and a fit concomitant of bottles and glass-ware. At first I thought of passing him at a long trot; but I had much to fear from an alarm, and therefore thought it more expedient to inquire for the master of the house, and beg an interview. The fellow looked very suspiciously at me, and returning to the head of the stairs, he called out, ''Ere, John, lend a heye 'ere a moment, while I lets master know as this gentleman wants a hinterview.'

"The knight of the napkin carried his tray into a room whence proceeded the grumbling of certain voices, while John kept a sharp look-out upon me from the landing-place. In a moment, out came a jolly looking old gentleman, with a rubicund face

as round as the crown of your hat, a Bardolphian gnomon in the centre, and in the corner of his mouth the latter end of an Havannah cigar. 'Well, who the deuce are you, sir? How came ye up in my maids' berths, and what were ye doing there?'

"I made a brief explanation of my situation with regard to my creditors, and begged that he would permit me to make his house a thoroughfare, as my only chance of avoiding their pursuit.

"'Howard? Howard? Don't know the name, sir; No. 38. Excuse me, my good sir, but one's obliged to be particular in London. Here, John, step over to No. 38; inquire the name, and just see if there are any sharks in the wake. Mr. Howard, walk in; and as soon as the lad returns, you shall be at liberty. These gentlemen, sir, are brother commodores of mine; pray be seated. I'm sorry you should find me in such a hurry-scurry, but I'm just going to sea, and have broken up housekeeping.' Further conversation elicited that the worthy gentleman into whose company I was thus accidentally thrown, was commander of a merchant ship outward-bound for Calcutta, with one vacant cabin. We came to terms, and here I am."

"Strike the bell four," growled the officer on watch.

"By Jove, Howard, there is two o'clock; let us turn in." And we descended to our cabins forthwith.

If, in the narrative of my voyage, the reader should be disappointed that I do not supply minute descriptions of the habits and history of the porpoise, grampus, boneta, &c., I beg to refer him to Rees' Encyclopedia, wherein his curiosity may be gratified by an exact and scientific classification, delineation, historical exhibition, and philological disquisition of caste, habit, and disposition of every known living creature that moveth. For my own part, I prefer to depict the feelings which actuate, and the deeds which characterise the lords of the creation. New varieties are to be found in every society, in every clime, in every age : in situations where local interest is comparatively wanting, diversion and improvement may invariably be discovered in the idiosyncracies of our companions.

Our time on board was certainly spent monotonously enough; our principal amusements consisted in shooting albatros, reading novels to the ladies, a little quarrelling, backgammon, a little

moonlight, eating, drinking, flirting, sleeping, and so on. These were our chief employments, and such they will continue, among two-thirds of the passengers to and from India, until some great revolution is wrought in the constitution and inclination of the India-going community. To add to the harmony of our voyage, we had by no means a despicable band of vocalists among us, and a tolerable selection of airs, catches, and glees; though we had cause to thank our stars there were no incipient fiddlers, fluters, or Kent-bugle players in our company.

When time hung more than usually heavy on our hands, we endeavoured to beguile it by plotting a little mischief, perhaps smoking an additional cigar, or following the leader to the royal-yard. A monkey, too, if there be fortunately one on board, is an excellent kill-time; you may sit and watch him for half an hour without being quite disgusted with his antics; or, as monkeys are scarce outward-bound, you may find it a delightful antidote to *ennui* to lie upon the broad of your back a-top of a hen-coop, and transfigure the spots and stains upon the awning into demons, Turk's-heads, or the girls you left behind you.

Occasionally a bit of a gale, maybe a hurricane, may come and diversify the scene, by carrying away a spar, or a little canvass. Indeed, we had a very terrific gale on the 3d of June, in latitude 41° S. The night was black as Cerberus, as Mrs. Malaprop would say, and the lightning was intense beyond anything I could have conceived. It was indeed very awful: every rope, the stitching of the sails, a pin upon the deck, might have been distinguished; and with a fearful brilliancy every object appeared steeped in liquid fire, and then as immediately quenched in the tangible darkness. The thunder was also terrible; it seemed to *fall upon us*, with a cracking rattling peal, such as England is unacquainted with.

The wind struck us in fitful gusts, which made our little vessel reel again, and for some time we were scudding under bare poles. At last we lay-to under a storm stay-sail. And now the poor ladies' confidence gave way; for as each successive sea struck the old ship upon her bows, she staggered as if she would really have gone down, and the water swept her decks from stem to stern, drenching every one on board, "without partiality, favour, or affection." The waves shewn by the lightning flashes were a vast expanse of foam and

floating spray, towering at one moment above our heads like mountain precipices falling in upon us, and the next instant exalting us upon the crest of their accumulated waters to a frightful eminence, from which we again descended with fearful velocity into the black abyss below.

Pigs, ducks, and sheep, had broken adrift from their prisons; and then there were dogs, spars, ropes, wash-deck tubs, and land-lubbers flying from side to side in admirable confusion. In the cuddy, like bees in a broken comb, ladies, children, and chairs with broken legs and damaged bottoms, chess-boards, bread and butter, Swallows, cold-pig, cards, water-jugs, screams, laughter, embroidery, and pickled salmon, were exquisitely mingled in the lee-scuppers, as if they had been arranged by the hands of a modern upholsterer.

The reader has been made acquainted with all the more prominent actors in the foregoing scenes; but I have to introduce one of our party whose unobtrusive and gentlemanly deportment won him the esteem and good-will of all on board, from the pompous Vangricken to "Jemmy-ducks."* This was George Harcourt, our chief mate, a fine handsome gentlemanly-looking fellow, about thirty

* The butcher's under-strapper.

years of age: his countenance was peculiarly striking, and wore a constant expression of benevolence and kindness of heart highly prepossessing, and in perfect accordance with his conduct. It may be supposed he was an universal favourite with the ladies, as well as among the rougher sex, and not the less so certainly on account of a never-varied melancholy which mingled in all he said and all he did, and the influence of which he appeared rather to cherish than resist. It was obvious that he was labouring under some grievous mental affliction or disappointment, the bitterness of which I fruitlessly endeavoured to soothe without probing his wound.

The sun went down beyond the cold glassy waters of the horizon; our ship was rolling in the long undulating swells of a dead calm after a fresh breeze; and as the pale moon began to show her light, the dull vacancy of the scene before me sent my meditations wending back to dear England, and the cheerful fire-side of my own sweet home. I stood upon the poop, leaning over the ship's side, watching the sleepy bubbles as they very slowly glided past, when a hand was gently pressed upon my shoulder, and turning, I found Harcourt by my side. The poop was deserted by

all except ourselves, and the never-absent helmsman; occasional bursts of merriment from the cuddy jarred upon the dreariness of the scene, and made us feel how little sympathy sadness of heart meets with in this cold world: this perhaps generated confidence between us. We had been intimate, but Harcourt, always in a measure reserved, never in any instance made an allusion to his own history, or that of any of his friends.

"Ah! Harcourt," said I; "I only wish I could look forward to a return to old England again as soon as you may. A few short months are but a passing banishment for you to undergo, whereas I must anticipate nothing less than ten years' exile. I would I were a sailor."

"I would to God I were anything but what I am," replied the poor fellow, with a broken voice; "but it matters not now; I know it can't last much longer."

I saw that his mind was too highly excited to bear question or common-place reply, but I spoke kindly and soothingly to him, until the sources of sorrow seemed to overflow, and covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears not to be repressed. When he somewhat recovered his composure, he exclaimed, "Oh! it

will be the death of her!" And then he added, 'But why should I bore you with my griefs?"

I assured him of my sympathy, and of my wish, if possible, to give him consolation. His heart yearned to cast off at least a portion of its burden; and, brushing the tears from his sun-burnt cheek, he told me his story nearly in the following words. But his tale deserves a chapter of its own.

CHAPTER III.

PRESENTIMENT.

"You said just now that you could not help being envious of my speedy return to old England. Do not think me weak—I cannot combat with the feeling—but I am certain in my heart that I shall never see the cliffs of my native land again. I am persuaded, by a vague unaccountable conviction, that some dire fortuity stands between me and my home. Home, did I say? the wide world is my only home now; but I know this is my last voyage upon the elements of this world. Before these planks and ropes are again in British water, I shall be a mass of corruption in the cold grave, or be hove overboard as food for the fishes.

"This is a terrible conviction; but though I struggled hard at first, I could not divest my mind of it, and now every passing day serves but to confirm the idea. You shake your head; now recollect my words: the day will speedily come

when you will say, 'Ah! poor fellow, he told me it would be so.' But it is not the death itself that I so dread,—that I could contemplate with little agitation or regret; it is the probable consequence of my death when the tidings shall reach England, from this I flinch.

"But, to commence my little narrative, I must go back to days of sunny bliss and joy, when all was glad and gay in this heart; before the blighting hand of woe had torn away the brilliant medium through which I looked upon the future.

"It is just about four years since I returned from a tedious and protracted voyage to China; and as soon as the duties of the ship permitted my absence from her, I hastened to the arms of an aged mother, who from the unusually protracted absence of our ship, and from accounts which had reached England of damages we had sustained in a hurricane off Bourbon, would I knew be more than ever anxious to embrace her only child. She had been a widow since the days of my boyhood, and subsisted frugally upon a small annuity, barely sufficient for her comfort, even when afterwards eked out by the poor pittance of my slender pay. She had, however, a pretty cottage upon the banks of the Thames near Rich-

mond; and her love for her boy, her wish to supply him with every thing which could enhance his pleasure or his comforts, had induced her more than once to receive into her little household lodgers of known worth and respectability."

"Oh! what a lovely glowing evening it was that saw me hastening from the stage-coach down to our little retreat. As I walked past the fashionable loungers, loitering about or driving their flash equipages to and fro, I could not help laughing in my heart at their vain folly; and as my mother's cottage hove in sight, glowing in the warm evening sunshine, with its creeping roses and myrtle, looking more fresh and beautiful than when I had left home, I could not help exclaiming aloud—'Is there one among yonder gay puppies can boast a joy like this?'

"As I approached nearer, I remarked that the house had been enlarged and newly painted, and there were many little improvements and alterations about the garden, giving the place an air of greater comfort and importance than it had before possessed. For an instant a chill of apprehension seized me, lest a more fearful change had occurred, but this pang was speedily replaced by a tear of joy and gratitude, as I recognized old

Neptune, my mother's favourite dog, lying upon the white step before the door, his glossy black coat shining in the golden rays of the setting sun, and his head resting on his paws. As I drew near the gate, he rose and stretched himself, and when I touched the latch, he commenced a low growl of disapprobation. 'Why, Nep!' said I; and in a moment the fine fellow was bounding down the little gravel path to welcome me. I hastened to the door and knocked gently. Some moments elapsed before my summons was replied to, and I was just framing a word or two of greeting for honest Mary, my mother's only servant, when a footman, in a handsome but unassuming livery, stood before me. The blood fled back to my heart, and a cold perspiration burst out upon my forehead: in an instant I remembered that I had been more than twelve months from home. 'Where is my mother?' I demanded of the man. 'Mrs. Harcourt is up-stairs, sir,' said he, respectfully inviting me to enter, 'I will let her know.' I was about to rush up before him, when he checked me by the arm—'Excuse me, sir, but you cannot see your mother just at this moment; she is asleep.' I dashed his hand aside, and springing up the

narrow staircase, I entered my mother's room. All was silent as the grave, and the curtains were drawn; some labelled vials on the dressing table, and other unerring tokens, told me at once the truth. I hastened to the bed, and with breathless apprehension drew back the curtain. My mother lay sleeping, her left hand extended, and in the gentle grasp of one, who, even in the presence of my sick mother, so fondly loved, rivetted my attention.

"Oh! she was, indeed, a beautiful girl. But I will not attempt to describe her, further than to mention, that she was exceedingly fair, with very light hair, but a deep lustrous blue eye, which gave token of a fervid soul. In figure, she was small and delicate in the extreme, and very graceful; so slight was her form, that it made one continually apprehensive lest aught of evil should befal her. She was sitting, or rather resting, upon the arm of a chair drawn close to the bed; her disengaged hand held some lace, upon which she had been working; and as she raised her fine eyes to mine, a faint exclamation of surprise escaped her. She put her finger on her lips. 'Hush! your mother sleeps. Thank God, you have returned.' She then rose, and gently disengaging

her hand, left the room, beckoning me to follow her. She went into the little front drawing-room, and taking me by the hand, said, 'O, sir, your mother has been very ill for some months past, and your long absence has, I fear, much preyed upon her rest; I am so very glad you have returned. She, dear woman, has been really somewhat better lately, and I trust we may look for some amendment. She speaks of nobody but you; and the last few days have been spent in incessant prayers for your return.'

"After some further conversation relative to my dear mother, she said: 'But are you not surprised at my boldness? You do not even yet know who I am, and I have been talking to you thus familiarly. You must excuse me: we are well acquainted with your portrait, which hangs over the mantel-piece there, and with yourself too, from your dear mother's conversation, so that I cannot but feel we are no strangers. My father is now out walking, but will be in before it is dark.'

"Half an hour's further conversation put me in possession of the following facts regarding this sweet girl and her father. They had been travelling on the Continent, and on their return to Eng-

land, being taken with the homely beauties of my mother's cottage, while passing down the river, had come to lodge in the house some eight months previous to my return to England. Two or three months' intercourse, though only occasional, between the hostess and her lodgers, had given rise to a mutual regard; which gradually ripened into a warm affection, when, during my mother's very dangerous illness, this lovely girl shewed the full kindness of her heart by her incessant watching and attentions, even to the prejudice of her own health.

"The tea-things had just been brought in, and the servant was excluding the remains of daylight, and making all snug by closing the shutters and lighting the candles, when the old father of my beautiful young companion entered. The pretty girl hastened into the passage to meet him, and give him the news of my arrival. He came in, and welcomed me home with so much warmth and affection, that the tears involuntarily started to my eyes: I was unused to such kindness and sympathy from strangers. I was much struck with the personal appearance of my new friend. In stature he was of medium height, say five feet nine, spare, and evidently in wretched bad health;

his hair was silvery white, and his countenance one of those in which all the good feelings of the heart speak out; the features being finely and even classically moulded, and the dark blue eye truly expressive of mildness and benevolence. Altogether there was something so remarkable and highly attractive about him, that I could not but love and esteem him at once, even before I had heard that mild, peaceful voice addressed to me in the accents of anxious kindness and solicitude. To a stranger he would have appeared, perhaps, seventy years of age, but he was much younger, not more than two or three and fifty: disease and care had brought him to a premature old age. Still I afterwards found that he was active in doing good, and seldom took his evening walk without relieving the distresses of some worthy poor family. I shall never forget the attitude and expression of the daughter, as she stood regarding her father with pride and affection, and when she turned to me, after the first greeting, her eyes asked, 'Do you not love him?' Indeed I could have answered in the affirmative.

"My mother still continued to sleep, all unconscious how near to her was that son who was so fondly loved, and who, perhaps, was at that very

moment the subject of her dreams. She did not awake until late at night, and it was then deemed advisable not to inform her of my arrival, unless she inquired for me.

"The next morning found her considerably better and stronger than she had been for many weeks; and you may conceive the delight that my re-appearance gave her. But I am growing tedious. Suffice it to say, that after a trying sickness of four months from this time, she was again about the house almost as well as ever; and in the interim, my ship being under extensive repairs, I had leisure to take watch-and-watch-about with my beautiful friend. Sometimes—nay, latterly, nearly always—we watched together, read together, sang together, and walked together; indeed, we were seldom separate, except when business required my presence at the dock. Excuse these tears: I cannot revert to those hours of pure delight without emotion. You may conceive the consequence of this intimacy, cut off, as we were, from all other society, and dependent upon each other for amusement and pastime. The old gentleman treated me as if I had been an only son; and, indeed, the most implicit confidence existed among us all: and

never once, during my four months' stay at home, did an unpleasant incident arise to damp, even for a moment, the pleasure of our intimacy.

"How few, how transient, are such hours as these! If we look for a continuance of such in this life, we shall assuredly be disappointed. The day came for my departure, and it was not till then that I felt, with its full weight, the new chain which now bound my affections to that sweet home. Mr. Graham assured me that he had no intention of changing his quarters, adding, 'You may fancy nine or ten months' absence a long time to look forward to; but when you do return, and find us all just as you left us, it will seem to have been but a week. God bless you, my dear boy, and restore you to us in safety in his own good time.' I bade my dear mother a fond adieu; and Ellen, with an unbidden tear standing in her eye, gave me her hand; I kissed it with a swelling heart, and hastened away.

"When I arrived on board ship, I found my cabin supplied with a number of well-selected and valuable books, and a few handsome nautical and mathematical instruments; and had there been no note to explain the circumstance, and

tender a little good advice, I should have been at no loss to fix upon the donor.

" My good old friend was right; the voyage to and from India *in prospectu* appeared interminable, but when within ten months I again found myself at the wicket of my mother's little estate, and again saw old Neptune lying on the white step at the entrance, I looked back upon the interval as but the lapse of a few short hours, and began to doubt the possibility of my having been so many thousand miles distant from the spot. All *was* as I had left it: my mother's health perhaps was better, and Ellen was gaining fast on womanhood, and growing daily more and more lovely.

" Twice or thrice did I thus return to my dear home, and still found it the same, without a change, except such as the enemy deals unflinchingly to all. The Grahams had become a part of our family; and, although no vows of affection had passed between Ellen and me, yet it appeared to be tacitly understood by all that something more than the attachment of cold regard existed between us; and before I left home, in 1829, my mother gave me to understand that it was the mutual wish of Mr. Graham and herself to see

my Ellen and me ultimately united, for better for worse.

"Our parting was still more tender than it had hitherto been, and as I left her I whispered, 'Next time, my precious girl, may I trust be the last.' I quitted home with bitter feelings of doubt and anxious uncertainty quite unusual to me. I had endeavoured to lead the conversation with Mr. Graham to the subject of my wishes; he saw my drift, and checked me. 'Not now, my boy,' said he; 'when you return next time, we will talk about it.'

"We made a prosperous and speedy passage to India, and when homeward-bound, touched at the Cape of Good Hope, to land passengers and take in stock. I had strolled with a friend to the public library and reading-room, and by mere chance, in running my eye over the columns of an English newspaper I came suddenly upon the notice of my mother's death; too circumstantial, alas! to leave hope of a mistake. You may conceive, perhaps, the wearying misery of those two months of our return to England. At last we arrived in town, and without a moment's delay I hurried down to Richmond, where my worst fears were of course confirmed. My house I found in the hand

of strangers, and now indeed I felt myself an out-cast upon the face of the wide world. There was not even a trace of my own Ellen, and the vulgar footman in yellow livery, who answered my summons to the door, replied to my inquiries, 'How the devil should I know?'

"I returned to the ship depressed and spirit-broken, and as I stepped on board, a porter put a note into my hand. I scarcely heeded him, believing it to be some business connected with the ship, but by habit I glanced at the address. Good God! how my heart leaped with gratitude and delight: it was my Ellen's handwriting. I read as follows:—

"'I have just heard of the arrival of your ship; God grant that you may have returned in health and safety: but, alas! ere this you must have heard all; your dear mother's affairs were placed by my beloved father in the hands of Messrs. P. and Co. of No. 3, —— street, just before his death: you will there find her last letters and bequests to you. My dear father had, at your mother's solicitation, undertaken to perform the offices of her executor and your guardian, and he pledged himself ever to think of you, and to treat

you as his own son, but he was not spared to fulfil even the former of these kindly parts, being suddenly snatched from us by a paralytic affection, bequeathing me to the protection and guardianship of my mother's brother, a rich merchant in the above firm, whom you have more than once seen at Richmond. I cannot write more: you will find me at No. —, —— street.

" 'Under all changes, believe me, ever the same,

" 'ELLEN.'

" 'P.S. I do not say come *speedily*.'

" Here was another fall down the precipice of my misery. All my feelings concentrated in that one word *woe*. I really thought my heart would burst. And was it really true? both gone? my all! and now no home was left to me. Still my Ellen remained, in the wreck of all my hopes and all my most cherished treasures. Would aught of evil fall on her? My brain reeled with apprehension, lest she too should be torn from me.

" The next morning I called, as Ellen had directed me, and was immediately shewn into her presence. Ah, how changed was she; beautiful indeed, perhaps more so than ever, but pale and

delicate in the extreme. The slight blush her cheek wore on my first entrance rapidly faded, and I saw it no more.

"'Have you not seen my uncle?' she inquired; 'he left the house to seek you.' I told her I had not seen him; and I observed her lovely bosom heaving with more than common emotion. She burst into a fearful flood of tears, and presently, while I still endeavoured to soothe her, exclaimed, 'Oh! George, I have much to tell you. If you really feel, as I believe you do, you have another severe trial to go through. Tell me, have you heard nothing about me since we parted?'

"I gasped for breath; I fancied I saw it all. 'What is it, my Ellen? tell me, or you will drive me mad.'

"With many tears and sobs of bitter anguish she explained as follows. 'At the time of my father's death, my uncle was out of town, and did not receive his summons to the last scene till all was over. Among his last papers, my father wrote a letter to my uncle, detailing to him the views and intentions of our mutual parents regarding our union, and requesting that if no impediment should intervene, our nuptials might take place on my becoming of age. In his will

he bequeathed to me his entire property (with the exception of a few small legacies), amounting to £22,000; but, oh! George, how can I tell it you? my uncle vows I never shall be yours, and is trying to force me into an alliance with his execrable son. The tyranny I have suffered under this roof has been almost too much for me to support; indeed my heart must break.' Poor Ellen continued to weep for some time, and then suddenly recovering herself she became apprehensive that if her uncle came in and found us alone, it might subject her to further harsh treatment.

"I did all I possibly could to reassure and calm her, asserting the impotence of her uncle's threats to dispose of her hand contrary to her own inclination. I was about to take my leave when Mr. Pitman entered the hall. Ellen tremblingly introduced us, for she had followed me to the door. Picture to yourself a very tall, very corpulent man, with a coarse, but acute business-like visage, a steady calculating eye, and a long straight ruddy nose, that you might see was equally well accustomed to point at pounds, shillings, and pence, or at the port bottle; this elegant whole was surmounted by a handsome brown wig of the true mercantile cut.

"'Oh, ho! young man, you're here, are you? A vastly pretty trudge I've had down to the docks and back after you, and now I find you here.' I told him politely, that I had come to pay my respects to him and his niece; that I presumed he was aware of the strong friendship which had existed between myself and Miss Graham's father, and the peculiar understanding, amounting almost to a pledge, under which I had quitted England.

"'And pray, sir,' said he, 'how came you to know, or what business had you to find out that my niece, Miss Graham, was living in my house, and under my protection, sir? A vastly pretty pass things are come to, when a gentleman is to be bearded in his own castle by a boy like you! Vastly fine! but I suppose the young lady had a letter awaiting your arrival, with an invitation to come and make a Red Lion of my house. Eh, sir? Vastly good!! Well, upon my honour, Miss Ellen! is the hall a proper place for young ladies to be pattering about, playing the housemaid? I think, young Miss, that the parlour or your own chamber would be more fit for you. Vastly good indeed!!!' And the old gentleman waxed vastly warm, even to the necessity of using his handkerchief. With a supercilious display of

mock courtesy, he now begged the honour of my company in his study, whither I followed him. He closed the door with a bang as vast as himself, and throwing himself into a large easy chair, motioned me to a music stool. I quietly put it on one side and seated myself in a chair. He eyed me for some time in profound silence, with an expression of bullying insolence. I broke the pause.

"'May I beg, sir, to be favoured with the object of this private interview, for such I presume it is intended to be.'

"'A fine fellow, truly,' said he; 'vastly fine, indeed! and as cool as saltpetre. And so, sir, you are a common sailor—I beg pardon—mate of a merchantman. If ever you command a vessel, I may, perhaps, be able to find you some cargo; that is, if you behave yourself so as to merit my favour. Nay, if on further acquaintance I should happen to take a fancy to you, I may, perhaps, be able to help you to a ship, which would be a handsome provision for you. I should wish to be useful to you, young sir, as you were a friend of my late brother-in-law; that is, as I said, if I find you deserving of my patronage. The command of a clipper is, I suppose, the very summit of your ambition; is it not?'

" 'Sir, you are particularly obliging, but I request you will consider me sincere and decisive in at once declining your offer of patronage. I cannot feel that I have any claims on your generosity except in regard to your niece, who was——

" 'My niece, sir! What the devil have you to do with my niece, sir?'

" 'Her father, sir —'

" 'Her father, sir! What the devil have you to do with her father, sir? When her father was alive, she was her father's daughter, and now he's dead, she's my niece, sir; just as much mine, sir, as any other piece of household stuff bequeathed to me.'

" 'Very true, sir; but we have been for the past twelve months as —'

" 'You have been, sir! Yes, you have been for the past twelve months a couple of fools, laying plans for the future, without considering that the odds are ten to one they would never be fulfilled. Hark ye, my fine fellow, my niece is my niece, and neither dead men nor live men shall interfere with my plans for her future life; she shall marry just as I think fit to give her away, without reference to the dead, or you, or herself either. Now, sir, how do you like that?'

" 'I protest, sir, against—'

" 'You protest, sir! who the devil are you, sir? You protest, indeed! vastly good! You, a wandering vagabond, with a penniless purse and a ragged shirt! Upon my honour, vastly good! vastly good, indeed!!! But, hark ye, sir; I may be induced to forgive you this insolence, if you promise to behave well in future—take my advice, think of it; and I may help you to make your fortune yet, if you are wise.'

"I had risen from my seat in indignant rage, maddened by his insulting language. My blood boiled almost to suffocation, and but for the sake of my Ellen, I should have floored him in his own castle, as he was pleased to call it. With a look that ought to have made him sensible of my contempt and hatred, I abruptly left the room, and hurried into the open air; you may believe I did not again darken his threshold.

"Ellen had retained her old servant, John, and through him we succeeded in carrying on a correspondence for some weeks. She told me of much harsh treatment which she experienced from her uncle, and did not conceal from me that her health was sinking daily, but rather spoke happily in anticipation of no very distant release from her

misery. Twice or thrice we met for a few minutes by appointment, but I had much difficulty in prevailing upon her to indulge me in this; and each time I saw her I could not but remark an increased change in her appearance. She grew daily paler and more weakly: the fire of her eye was quenched, and the elasticity of her step had left her.

"She had engaged one day to meet me in the park, and in her place came John. Tears glistened in his eyes as he said, 'Ah, sir, my sweet young mistress is taken very ill; I'm afraid she's not long for this world; poor dear young lady, she was never used to hard words, and can't bear it, for she was always a tendersome thing like, and now her strength is clean worn out.' From further conversation with John, it appeared that Ellen was confined to her bed with severe fever, and that her medical advisers spoke alarmingly as to the probable result of her illness. John also told me that he feared personal violence had been inflicted on her; for upon one occasion he had fancied that he heard his young mistress crying in piteous accents for mercy, and on entering the room under some pretext, he found Mr. Pitman almost frenzied with the violence of his anger,

and poor Ellen lying almost senseless upon the couch. John's officious anxiety for his young mistress's welfare was repaid by un uncourteous ejection from the room. Afterwards it was seen that poor Ellen's face was sadly bruised, but this the brutal man affirmed had been done by a fall during a fit of hysterical excitement. This, though not denied, was never confirmed by Ellen, who persevered in vain attempts to appease rather than defy his tyranny.

"From this time John brought me daily accounts of her health, and although until the time of my departure from England no immediate danger was anticipated, yet she continued too much an invalid to leave her couch, so that I was unable to bid her adieu, except by letter, and this I am convinced was my last communication withher in this world —the last of my Ellen; for I feel confident I shall not live to see England again; and my poor Ellen too, I fear, cannot last long under such treatment; remember what she had been used to."

Harcourt here concluded his touching tale, and I endeavoured to reason him out of his despondency, telling him it was unmanly to give way to it, and that I should expect ere long to see him in command of a clipper, and master of his own

little Ellen; but I could not shake his fatal presentiment. He shook his head, exclaiming, "Mark my words, it will be as I say."

I will anticipate my narrative a little, and conclude poor Harcourt's history. He continued in the same melancholy state of mind until our arrival in the river Ganges, on the 3d of August, 1831. A violent cold, which he had neglected, had settled on his lungs and became chronic. He had been for some weeks on the doctor's list, and of the fine handsome fellow who had sailed from England with us, little was recognisable beyond the still noble features and commanding figure—commanding even in its decline. A sunken cheek and fireless eye told that the mind was preying upon the body.

On the morning above-mentioned he was standing upon the starboard side of the quarter-deck giving directions about the cable, when a heavy rope, cast off from the main-top, struck him on the head and laid him senseless on the deck. He was immediately carried to his cabin, and was soon restored to consciousness; but the surgeon shook his head, and with good reason, for poor Harcourt never again recovered the use of his limbs. He was removed ashore to the house of a

friend in Calcutta, where I frequently visited him; it was a melancholy pleasure, for it was evident that he was sinking fast into the grave; of this he was well aware, and often alluded cheerfully to his approaching end. On the 15th of August, twelve days after our arrival in Calcutta, I followed with sincere mourning his remains to the burial-ground at Chowringhee.

This was the end of the excellent Harcourt—*he told me it would be so.* What has become of his Ellen? Has she taken the wings of a dove and flown to meet her devoted George? or has she become the humdrum wife of a counting-house clerk?

CHAPTER IV.

MADRAS.

Soon after daylight on the morning of the 20th of July, we made the coast of Coromandel, and about noon four of the natives came out to us on *katamarans*, a species of raft used along this coast for riding through the surf: it is constructed of two large pieces of timber, lashed together at some little distance from each other, so as to admit the action of the water between them. These black fellows brought fruit and fish for sale; but, oh, how the ladies, both old, middle-aged, and young, did blush when they saw four hairy rascals jump on board in a costume to which, in comparison, Achilles in Hyde Park is liberally clad; some turned their heads and placed a thin veil between their organs of vision and the eyesore; some screened their eyes with their open fingers or lattice-worked ivory fans, while others again—but come, I will spare them and the modest reader further blushes.

We gave the fellows some small copper coins and a bottle of brandy, with which they disappeared over the ship's side highly delighted with their speculation. We saw them tap the spirits by breaking a round hole in the shoulder of the bottle, and the scramble for the contents which ensued was highly amusing. Soon after dark the Madras light-house hove in sight, and a spanking breeze carried us into the roads, where we cast anchor at ten o'clock P.M.

The coast, as seen from the roads, is anything but picturesque or otherwise interesting. The flat sandy country, bearing only patches of yellow parched jungul grass, and a few stunted things, mere abortions of vegetation, miscalled trees, has the aspect of miserable sterility and desolation. The town itself, however, is a more pleasing object in the scene, and the white houses and offices, though situated on a low sandy beach, have an air of comfort and cleanliness. In the distance beyond the town again is something more agreeable to the eye than the barrenness of the outline coast;—a partially undulated country, more generously clad in green, and bearing extensive plantations of various kinds of trees; more particularly the banyan, mango, and yellow tulip.

The locality of Madras is certainly not a happy one: there is a continual current running from N.E. to S.W. ; and the surf which prevails all along the Coromandel coast is so violent as to be scarcely ever practicable to anything but the native *katamarans* or *massulah-boats.* The latter are very capacious clumsy-looking craft, built of slender planks, sewn together with cords made of the rind of the cocoa-nut, called *kaiya,* and caulked with dried grass. It is evidently the elasticity of these boats as much as their form in which their safety consists; they yield to the force of the sea in a manner by no means pleasurable to a nervous imagination. The crew usually musters from sixteen to twenty grotesque-looking figures almost naked, who accompany their labour with a wild song and heathenish antics infinitely picturesque.

As soon as the boat arrives at the first line of surf, the boatmen back their oars until it is lifted and carried forward by the rolling wave; they then, with shouts and the most impassioned gestures, ply with redoubled energy their long unwieldy paddles, in order to prevent the boat from being carried back by the receding waters; which, should it take place, would inevitably subject all hands to a ducking, for the next surf

meeting the returning boat would break clean over it at the risk of swamping it altogether.

On the morning after our arrival, almost before the day had dawned, the deck was literally crammed with natives of all vocations, and of every gradation of colour, from positive black to a dingy straw-colour; fruiterers, venders of sweetmeats, language-masters, butchers, tailors, *dubaches*, or, as we Bengallis call them, *sircars*—that is, agents, men of general business—servants out of employ, with a thousand other rogues to boot.

Immediately after breakfast, although the thermometer stood at 96°, Farh., a party of us jumped into a *massulah-boat*, and were quickly riding over the surf. Right glad were we to set foot once more upon the solid earth, for we had been four entire calendar months immured within our floating prison. Even our pickaback ride from the boat to the dry ground, which was undertaken to save our nether integuments from the water, was heartily enjoyed by old and young, not excepting an old civilian, whose biped ass missed his footing, and came down with him into the water.

We were received on the beach by a countless multitude of hot steamy-looking black fellows, bothering and plaguing us to buy this or that de-

lectable article: "Master, buy my very fine beef"—"Beautiful razors got, sir; master, try"—"Very sweet cabbage, sir; master take cabbage;" &c. We said all we could in English to get rid of these pests, but finding it of no avail, Howard tried them with Hindustani; this, however, was Greek to them, and he was compelled to fall back upon his only two words of Malabar, "*Shigram po—shigram po*!"—literally, "Go quickly." But black men, when their own interests are concerned, are unfortunately gifted with perseverance, and we were escorted to the hotel by a dense mob of perspiring unclad rubbish-venders, for alas! there were no Peelers to disperse them.

There is nothing very remarkable about Fort St. George: it is neat and clean; but here, as in all the vicinity of Madras, the red brick-dust roads are an intolerable nuisance. As a military construction, the Fort is by no means worthy of particular notice. The church is good and spacious, and has a handsome spire, better built than anything of the kind of which we can boast in Calcutta; but there are no lions worthy of lengthy description.

The Government-house, which stands upon the Esplanade, is a large handsome building; and the

Exchange may also be mentioned as one of the principal public buildings. A light-house has been erected upon it, the summit of which is 95 feet above the level of the sea. In the Square there is a fine colossal statue of the Marquis Cornwallis, which is falling rapidly to decay, having no protection from the weather. This figure was executed in London by the late Thomas Banks, R.A., whose genius won him just celebrity; though he was peculiar in some of his sentiments, an example of which was exhibited in his design of this statue. Those who were acquainted personally with the late noble Marquis, need not be told that he had a cast *outwards* of one eye. While the work in question was in the model, Banks received a visit from a brother Royal Academician, who expressed his astonishment on observing that Banks had thought proper to make the statue commemorate this obliquity of vision. Banks, however, contested the point on these grounds: "If," said he, "the cast had been *inwards*, it would, I conceive, have conveyed the impression of a contracted character, and I would have corrected it; but as eyes looking to the right and left at the same moment, would impart the idea of an enlarged and comprehensive mind, I have

thought it due to the illustrious Governor-general to convey to posterity this natural indication of mental greatness, which I am convinced all must be sensible of, on observing the peculiarity referred to." Had I been in possession of this anecdote before I went out to India, I should have been particular in ascertaining if Banks really persisted in this notion, so far as to transfer the defect from the model to the marble; but having been in ignorance of this story while at Madras, I must leave others, who may hereafter visit the statue, to make the observation. Be this as it may, for the fact above stated I have excellent authority, since the artist who remonstrated with Banks was my grandfather, and he related the circumstance to my father on his return from Banks's *studio*.

Besides this statue, there is on the Mount-road a mean tasteless cenotaph, erected to the Marquis's memory. Who the builder may have been I know not, and it should certainly be his care to keep all the world in ignorance. It has, however, been selected as the favourite lounge; and here in the cool of the evening may be seen all that Madras can boast of the gay and beautiful, bedecked in all the colours of the rainbow, and in all the multifarious fashions of the past century.

All these lions had been inspected before the day closed, and after dark I drove out to St. Thomas's Mount, the Artillery head-quarters, about seven miles distant from Fort St. George. The Mount-road is exceedingly beautiful, being nearly all the way a continued grove of yellow-tulip trees, banyans, and mangoes. I so loitered away my time on this pleasant road, that I did not arrive at the Artillery mess-house until dinner had been removed from table. I however fared pretty well upon a reclaimed curry and cold claret.

A friend provided me with a bed, and, thoroughly worn out with fatigue, I turned-in soon after midnight. In two minutes I fell asleep under a fine canopy of musquito-gauze; in two minutes more, however, I was aroused from my slumbers by buz——z in one ear, then whiz——z in the other; then a dreadful irritation and swelling on the end of my nose; then on my foot, ditto cheek, ditto hands, ditto legs, ditto ditto all over, until I was fairly driven out of my bed, half-mad. I roared out for a light, and took a delicious revenge upon a score or two of fat fellows, who had gorged themselves to repletion on my blood, and who were sticking to the curtains without the possibility of making their escape by flight, the weight of their

over-stuffed bodies being too great for the power of their wings. There I stood, in my night-clothes, murdering these pigmy harpies, until my hands were covered with blood, and the white curtains were speckled like a school-boy's pocket-handkerchief.

I turned in once more, but to little purpose; the voices of the musquitos, tenor, treble, counter-tenor, and bass, kept up a chorus that would have awaked Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle; then their poisonous bite; the hoarse croaking of the bull-frogs just under the window; the incessant whir——r of the crickets and grass-flies; the tic-tic-tic of the lizard; and the howling of the pariah-dogs, drove me into a positive state of frenzy. At last, I had almost coaxed old Somnus to descend, and was gradually mingling all my persecutions in one common feeling of discomfort, when a blaze of lurid torch-light glared into the room, and then came an excruciating unmusical burst of tom-toms, pipes, and sundry poker-and-tongs-like instruments, at which good Morpheus took fright, and not one wink of sleep did I get that night.

At breakfast, I gave vent to my complaints in a pitiable relation of the miseries which I had

gone through during the night: all the sympathy, however, which I met with was an assurance that the noise was only occasioned by a marriage procession, which happened every night in the year; and as to the musquitoes, I should soon become so used to them as to be unable to sleep without having half-a-dozen put inside the curtains before going to bed.

I certainly was anything but charmed, nay I was very particularly disgusted, with what I saw here of a subaltern's life in India. Their home is divided between a comfortless half-furnished bungalow, their stables, and the mess-house. The day is spent somewhat as follows:—Parade at daylight; idling, perhaps a nap, till eleven o'clock; breakfast at twelve; idling till three; after which, tiffin and beer-drinking; and from four till sunset a game at rackets, accompanied with cigars and *brandy-pani*; another parade, perhaps, or a ride until dark; then returns the mess and wine-bibbing until midnight, followed most probably by such a night as I have just described.

One such day fairly sickened me, and I gladly accepted an invitation to take up my quarters at the house of Mr. Turnbull, the Accountant-

general. Here everything was in the first style of luxury; and the liberal hospitality of the host rendered his house, or rather palace, a place of most delightful sojourn. During our stay at Madras, the thermometer continued to fluctuate between 96° and 98° Fahrenheit in the shade; but this coast has the advantage of a divine sea-breeze which sets in about half-past three o'clock, just in time to prevent utter dissolution, and to re-suscitate one sufficiently to be somewhat fit for the duties of the principal meal. Dinner comes on table about eight o'clock, or half-past, and consists chiefly of tempting made-dishes, French, English, and Oriental; fricassees, stews, curries, &c., most delightfully moistened with the choicest claret, madeira, and champaign.

Having indulged in all this luxury, it was with no very amiable submission that I found myself once more compelled to recal my whims and appetites, within the narrow limits, and less delicate entertainment, of our good ship.

On the 27th of the month all the passengers on shore received from the jolly skipper a summons to be again afloat before night-fall, as he intended to be off and away with the peep of dawn next day.

The evening-gun had just fired * from the ramparts of Fort St.George, when my *massulah-boat* put off from the shore, and had the surf been high, or the night dark, I should certainly have suffered a thorough ducking in punishment for my want of punctuality; with my customary good fortune, however, I found the sea less boisterous than usual, and the broad full moon shining most gloriously over the sparkling waves, as they came rolling in upon the sandy beach.

What is there in all the world which carries the "sweet-home feelings" of the exiled Englishman back to his native land with such a touching influence, as the tumbling, swelling fluctuation of the sea along the level strand, or the curdling foam and spray of the waters breaking upon a projecting rock. It is the last thing he listens to on quitting his native island, and it is the first he hears when setting foot upon a foreign coast; the very waters are a part and parcel of the same wide flood which washes round his own far distant home. All are supposed to know that feelings such as these cling round the heart of the wanderer; those who have never left their native village, fancy they can appreciate the glow which kindles

* Nine o'clock, P.M.

in the bosom of the exile, when suddenly his thoughts are thrown in retrospection on his home. But no, they are mistaken ; the weight of impassioned sensibility I here refer to may be felt in experience, it never can be known in imagination : description, the most emphatic words, can give no inkling of its pressure; its essence is in association, not in conception.

These sensations were not indulged in their full force when I landed at Madras : four months' imprisonment within our wooden walls had then set me hotly bent upon my freedom, and time and circumstance thrust off the intrusion of such sentiment. If perchance a sigh for home, dear home, rose in my heart, 'twas stifled at once, and novelty on all sides was supplied as food and entertainment to the mind : but when I found myself returning to the same floating prison which had borne me from my own land, when I looked upon the placid moon which in a few short hours would possibly shine as sweetly, if not as brilliantly, upon the home of my childhood, I fell back upon the chequered speculation of romance, and shut out from mental vision the images of the material scene before me. My

soft reverie was broken as I neared the ship by a challenge chanted in a sweet syren's voice from the poop :

"What boat ahoy ?"

"The Muse."

"What have you got in ?"

"Sighs and sentiment."

"Then sheer off, you lubber," responded Miss Lavinia Swallow; "we've got all our heavy cargo aboard, and have only stowage for light freight."

I found myself the last on board; the whole party were seated upon the poop, refreshing themselves with wine and biscuit, and the majority of the gentlemen were smoking cigars. The Swallows, from Swallow senior to the least of all the Swallows, occupied the centre benches, the other ladies were seated upon the lower ranges of hen-coops, and the gents. lay scattered about the deck and lower rigging in attitudes and costumes the most free and easy.

Vangricken formed the centre of the group: he was seated in a deep easy chair, which compelled him to keep his timber limb straight out at right angles to his body. He was clad in a white jacket, with a pair of very ample blue silk trow-

sers; his beard and moustaches had been suffered to grow about a week, as he had lately taken up a notion that it was sinful for man to shave off that which God had given him as an ornament to his face, and as a distinction in feature between the lord of the creation and his helpmate; his head was crowned with a scarlet and gold foraging-cap, a remnant of his service in the Irregular Horse; and, to complete the picture, upon the point of his wooden toe, elevated as it was in the air, his own especial favourite, Miss Swallow the elder, had hung a small wicker-basket which contained her knitting worsteds, the which our good friend Van. was bobbing about with a tremulous motion of his leg as if he really delighted to toy with the thing.

"Come, Howard," said Vangricken, "do give us one of those sweet melodies I so love to hear you sing."

"Really, Major, you are very rude," responded Miss Virginia; "do you not observe that Mr. Howard is engaged in conversation with me? I'm sure you only call for a song for the sake of having the compliment returned. We have had singing *ad nauseam*; there has been nothing but singing all the way from England; besides, Mr.

Howard's singing that trash is simply a case,

> —— "Pravo vivere naso,
> Spectandum nigris oculis, nigroque capillo,"

as Horace has said; his fine voice only renders the vapid absurdity of the words the more conspicuous."

"Why, Virginia," exclaimed the father, "your Latin master never did you any good after all: you don't mean to say that Mr. Howard has black hair and eyes? Besides, what his having an ugly nose has to do with his voice I can't at all make out."

"La, pa! how very stupid! You're really quite provoking: I never said Mr. Howard had an ugly nose; I spoke in metaphor, as the passage was written by the Latin poet. You don't at all understand the use of figures."

"Well, Miss, I think you have made a very pretty figure of Mr. Howard, at all events, with the ugly nose, and black eyes and hair; but if your conversation is too important to be broken in upon by a song, perhaps you won't mind telling us what it's about."

"Why, pa, Mr. Howard was telling me the melancholy history of that poor misguided creature we saw at the hotel; he says you know her

husband Mr. —— in Calcutta. Poor thing! what lovely eyes she has!"

"Ah! I know it; and it ought to be a warning to all young ladies. I think, Miss, your quotation from Horace would have come in better here; you see her beauty only renders her conduct the more lamentable, and—"

"Yes, pa," chimed in the elder Miss Swallow; "and Ensign ——'s hair and eyes were black."

"And he had a frightful nose," said Miss Lavinia.

"Upon my word, girls, you're monstrous vulgar," said mamma, "applying such eligies to people you know very little about. I assure you it's not at all *comme il faut* to pass such severe remarks upon others. My love, I wish you wouldn't encourage the girls in such improprieties of speech."

Vangricken, with his usual flight of thought, struck in: "Do you think that people will subscribe for such a thing, Mr. Swallow, when Lord William leaves the country?"

"Such a thing as what, sir?"

"Why that statue of the Marquis."

"Erect a statue to Lord William's memory! What for?"

"Why, it's not unlikely that they—"

"Not unlikely, sir! yes, it is, very unlikely. Those that he has injured won't subscribe from principle, and those that he has pampered are more likely to do a great man homage when he's mounting his *musnud,** than when he's descending from it. What did his Lordship do but evil at Madras when he was governor? what did he do but mischief to Sicily? and then in his administration as Governor-general—"

"But, Mr. Swallow, all people do not think thus of his—"

"I tell you they do, sir, only they're afraid to say so."

"Pooh! pooh! Mr. Swallow—"

"Pooh! pooh! sir? It's no pooh! pooh! at all, sir. What have we ever seen or heard of but duplicity, and cunning, and narrow-mindedness, and cant, and espionage, and selfishness, and non-interference? Has he not destroyed the confidence of the soldier, the agriculturist, the commercial man, and all other classes of society, by his favoritism, his subtlety, and his unbending want of sympathy. I tell you, sir—"

"I tell you, Mr. Swallow, that you are wrong

* *Musnud*, throne, seat of power, authority—Hindustani.

to speak thus intemperately of his lordship, he has done much good for India, and there are many who will readily come forward to express their admiration of—"

"Pray, Major," asked Howard, "are you a relation of his lordship's? That, *Van*, looks rather suspicious."

"No, Howard, I am not a relation, that is, I'm not a——a——"

"Ah! never mind, you have cause to speak well of him, I suppose—"

"Mr. Howard, I beg you will leave the Major to me, I shall soon convince him. Now, sir—"

"My love, Mr. S., will you hold your tongue," cried Mrs. Swallow, who had been kicking her husband's leg, and pulling his button behind for the last five minutes, "really you do get so angry I'm quite alarmed to see you when you set upon discussing of all these politics: it's only teaching of the girls tricks and foolery: why 'twas only yesterday I heard Lavy talking to the doctor about reform, and whigs, and tories, and such like: I gave the girl a good jobation, and five minutes afterwards I heard Virgy talking about gymnastics, and idrawlics, and those hard words, I never thought they ought to have learnt, only you insisted

upon it; really, Mr. Swallow, I think your money might have been better spent."

"There, ma," said Miss Virgy, "that's always the way with you, you commence with political economy, and end in domestic economy; '*Les extrémités se touchent; du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas.*' And then really your words are strangely selected: what have gymnastics to do with hydraulics? Indeed ma, you only display your own ignorance in making remarks upon such subjects."

"What do you mean, miss, by talking to me in this manner; I just told you such criticisms are not considered *comme il faut* in society now; but it's no use taking pains with you when your papa sets you such a bad example."

Here the voice of Swallow was heard gradually swelling louder and louder, from the grumbling explanatory tone which he had in the interim assumed towards Vangricken. "No, Major, no, you mistake me; the fault does not exist in our government at home: they are honourable and liberal to a proverb, and have no participation in the abuses which abound in all branches of the local government; and this is the only prop the country has left; why here, sir, in three short years has this man torn down the supports, and

gutted the constitution—and—and—why the papers are teeming with it, sir—that is, those who have the pluck to speak their true sentiments upon the subject; as to the cringing sycophants—"

"Heighty teighty, good friend Swallow," exclaimed our merry captain, his jolly ruddy face rivalling the rotundity of the moon, as it rose over the combings of the poop sky-light, where he had been examining his barometers, "why you wax wrath to-night: what is it? politics? Lord William, I'll lay a wager; I heard you, my friend—'duplicity'—'narrow-mindedness'—'espionage'-'favoritism'—'sycophants'—I heard you; but come, put up your cudgels for to-night; I'm going to do pretty to the ladies, and give them a glass of negus and a hop, by way of welcome back to the ——. Steward, look sharp there with the negus, and send up half-a-dozen of champaign."

"Master, want Peter look sharp? Niggers allus look sharp for champaign, master."

"Who spoke to you, Snowball? I said negus, not niggers, you booby."

"Both a-same sweet, master," replied the Hottentot, as he leisurely moved off.

"Here, Snowball, come here," said the captain.

"My name not Snowball, seh, my name Mr. Peter Quagmire," retorted the black, drawing himself up to the extent of his diminutive stature.

"Well, then, Mr. Peter Quagmire, have the goodness to go and send Sandy M'Growler aft with his pipes. It's a strange thing," he added, turning to the passengers, "these African blacks have invariably a strong antipathy to anything like a nickname; they will allow you to abuse them with the foulest terms of opprobrium, or you may rope's-end them till they are black and blue, without being able to wring a murmur from them, but the moment you substitute a *soubriquet* in place of their more euphonious appellations, their spirit kicks against such an infringement of their immunities of nomenclature, and—"

"Dear me, captain," said Miss Lavinia, "how very florid you are in your language this evening; as bad as pa with his politics; all in one short sentence we had 'antipathy'—'*opprobrium*,' Latin, —'*black-and-blue*,' meant for a figure of speech, as Virgy says—'*soubriquet*,' French—and let me see; what's the last? I've had to count 'em all upon my fingers: oh! 'infringement of immunities of nomenclature.' La, what favour you'll be in with Virgy."

Our good-natured commander continued without noticing the young lady's comments, "I remember some years since having come to an anchor off Sagor Island, while towing out of the Hooghli, I paid the skipper of the steamer a visit on board: he was expatiating upon the superior pluck of the African niggers compared with the Bengallis, and had been describing to me some daring feat performed by one of his own crew, during stress of weather which they had suffered upon the '*James and Mary*,' when the man of whom he spoke happened to come aft to sweep the deck. 'There,' said the skipper, pointing to an active well-clad fellow, 'that is the individual, the very individual.'

"'No, master, no; what me?' exclaimed the indignant Hottentot, dropping his besom, and expanding wide his eyes, nose, mouth, and fingers, 'what me? John Cockle a ninnibidual? no, master, John Cockle neber permit to call him ninnibidual: John Cockle been long time now wid master, lub master like de debble; let him kill, do any ting, but not call anybidual. How many times master call John Cockle liar, tief, rascal, black debble; how many times master kick and rope's-end poor John Cockle, and swear

at him, and trow de speaking-trumpet at him black head, and good John take him all as easy as de little sucking pig; but him know when him 'bused and 'sulted before stranger gentleman, and so him tell master, to him teet, him no many-bidual.'"

Here a flourish from Sandy M'Growler's pipes summoned the party to the quarter-deck; and the captain having perched the piper upon the capstern-head, made his little fat bow to his peculiar protegée, a tall, saturnine, half-caste girl, as apt an illustration of Miss Virgy's quotation from Horace as any which could possibly have been selected.

"Miss Bodkin," said the lady's antiperistasis, "we know your pretty little feet to be more active than your tongue, though they make as little noise; come along; fat as I am, I can pirouette, or, if need be, perhaps shuffle through a hornpipe or a jig, as you know, though they are now considered *infra dig.*"

"In for a dig, sir; I don't *exactly* understand you," replied the coy young lady, striving to look pleasant.

"La, Miss Bodkin," exclaimed Miss Virgy, "who *was* your Latin master? the Captain was

using a contraction from the Latin phrase *infra dignitate*—"

"Tush! Virgy, Virgy, *tem! tem!! tem!!! infra dignitatem. Infra* governs the accusative. I think after all, upon my word, that Miss Bodkin is more fortunate in her want of Latin than you in your ignorant smattering of it. I hate to hear your conversation interlarded with Latin, and Greek, and French, and German; you're never safe but when you're making use of a sentence that you've learnt thoroughly by heart. The girl's right in making use of her own tongue."

"But the Captain says she's got none, pa," interposed Miss Swallow.

"Then the Captain's o'er frack 'ith his ain tong," said a little wee bit of a doctor, from the land of cakes, aside to Miss Bodkin, in whose affection he had long striven to establish a rival interest: "he's na correct mun; ye've as pritty a tong as the Captain hersel; if ye—"

"Strike up, Sandy," cried the Captain, as he saw the whole party waiting for the music: the tail end of the little Scot's compliment was swallowed up in the drone of his national pipes, and away floated his dusky goddess with the more favoured son of Neptune.

The scene upon the quarter-deck formed a strange contrast to that which was being enacted upon the forecastle, where the hardy tars, taking advantage of the screaming music, which was seldom permitted to be called for, were displaying their rough figures in all the fantastic attitudes of English, Scotch, and Irish saltation, thrown out in most grotesque relief upon the moonlit sky.

We weighed anchor, and sailed out of the Madras roads soon after day-break the next morning, with a stiff breeze from the S.W., before which we bowled away in gallant style, steering directly for the Hooghli. On the evening of the 2d of August, we took a pilot on board, and the next morning we entered the river; our passage from Madras being by far the smartest thing our old tub had done for many a long day.

On the eastern side of the entrance to the Hooghli is Sagor Island, formed by the confluence of an inferior branch of the Ganges with the former river. It is some twenty miles in length, and not more than six or seven in average breadth, having its shores all around covered with a thick rank jungul, except here and there, where recent adventurers have cleared small spaces, and erected a few shabby houses. In the interior, a

large tract has been cleared by burning; but more than once, the enterprizing settlers have, I hear, been driven from their fences by the descent of tigers and other wild beasts, which abound on the island.

The anchorage here has been proved to be less destructive to European seamen than the stations higher up the river; but this is probably to be accounted for by the circumstance, that the vessels having more sea room, are enabled to lie further off the land, and thus escape in a great measure the malaria and exhalations arising from the decaying vegetation. The island is esteemed sacred by the natives, in consequence of the mingling of the waters of the holy stream with those of the ocean: it was formerly a resort of pilgrims, and some few devotees resided there; but lately it has not been very much frequented, and the voluntary sacrifices of human life, which at one time took place, have long since ceased altogether.

Above Sagor Island is a dangerous sand-bank, called the 'James and Mary', which, by its constant shifting, completely baffles all mariners, and forms a decided impediment to navigators, who are not continually plying up and down the river. This bank is thrown up by the eddies in the junc-

tion of the Hooghli and Roopnurrein. About half way between Calcutta and the ocean is Diamond Harbour, notorious for its execrable climate, which annually carries off vast numbers of our British seamen. The selection of such a spot for a commercial station and depôt, is unaccountable; it appears to be a sink for all sorts of putrescence and filth, the effluvia from which is abominable beyond conception.

It is impossible not to be struck with the beauty of the scenery in approaching Calcutta. The banks which, lower down, have been flat and comparatively devoid of forest trees, become bolder, and are richly clad in a great variety of the most beautiful foliage: here and there handsome houses are seen jutting from the cover of the trees, becoming more and more numerous, until Garden-reach presents a regular succession of magnificent villas and mansions, with parks and pleasure-grounds most tastefully laid out, in such style as gives to the traveller an idea of exceeding luxury and wealth. Then Fort William opens on the view, its green ramparts surmounted with artillery *en cavalier*, which, together with the regularity of its fortifications, and the height of its barracks, gives it an air of command and importance, which

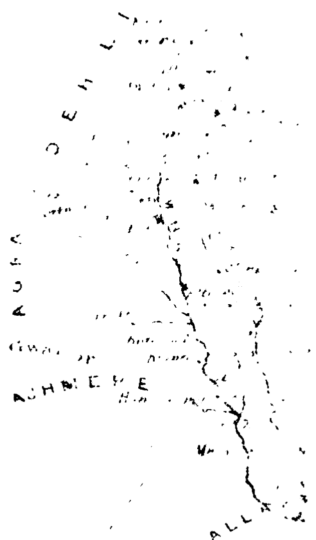
is not a little aided by the breadth of the esplanade, beyond which lies the far-famed city of palaces, Calcutta. The scene is truly imposing, and very novel in its character to any person visiting India for the first time.

The noble structures, which form the residences and offices of the British, are in a Grecian style of architecture, and are strikingly relieved by the decided contrast exhibited in the native portion of the city higher up the river; where the dingy brick buildings, or mud huts, are out-topped by Hindoo temples of every shape and colour. The shipping and innumerable small craft upon the water add wonderfully to the picturesque effect and interest of the scene. But Calcutta, with all its lions, has been too frequently, too recently, and too ably described by others, to render any more detailed account of its outward appearance at all desirable here.

CHAPTER V.

CALCUTTA.

SCARCELY had our good ship come to an anchor off Colvin's Ghát, when we were boarded by a non-commissioned officer of artillery, whose business it was to receive charge of, and safely conduct into Fort William, all unfortunate cadets who might be among the passengers. Being one of this ill-starred number, I collected my baggage, and, in common with half-a-dozen more, equally happy fellows, tumbled into a palanquin, and was conducted to the South barracks, which are appropriated to the accommodation of cadets. But before I proceed, I must endeavour to instil into my gentle reader a somewhat more correct idea of this vehicle, than is generally entertained by fire-side travellers: the thing has been frequently described, and variously pictured, but I have never yet fallen in with a faithful delineation of this demi-barbarous method of locomotion, such as it now is in Bengal.



Outlines of the Rivers

HOOGHLI, BHAGARATTI, GANGES

JUMNA &c

with the

Principal Cities and Towns

upon their Banks



0 50 100 150 200 Miles

25° North

London, W.H. Allen & Co. 7 Leadenhall St.

[illegible]

[illegible] I pro[illegible]

[illegible] has been frequently de[illegible]
[illegible] tered, but I have [illegible]
[illegible] a faithful [illegible] of [illegible]
[illegible] of locomotion, [illegible]

Outlines of the Rivers

HOOGHLI, BHAGARATTI, GANGES,

JUMNA, &c.

with the

Principal Cities, and Towns

upon their Banks.

0 50 100 150 200 Miles

Day & Haghe Lith.

A palanquin, *vulgariter* palki, and its *modus operandi*, should be familiar to the imagination of every one who condescends to peruse the wanderings of a traveller in India; since it must frequently occur that the whole point and seasoning of an anecdote may hinge upon a faithful conception of the conveyance.

A bumpkin in some vulgar farce, asks the buffoon the way to the magistrate's house; the buffoon gives directions after his own fashion. "Do you know the bridge?" "Yes." "Well it ai'n't nowhere near there.—Do you know the Crown?" "Yes." "Well it ai'n't nowhere near there.—Do you know the Church?" "Yes." "Well it ai'n't nowhere near there." Now let me beg the reader to take a peep into the miniature edition of Sam. Johnson's Dictionary for the word Palanquin; it is thus defined, "An Indian Sedan or Chair." Now Sam. Johnson has left the reader just as far from any idea of a palanquin as the bumpkin was from the magistrate's after listening to the directions of the fool. A palki is no more like a sedan, no more like a chair than Sam. Johnson was like the Thames Tunnel: it might just as well have been described as a seaman's chest, or a flour-bin; nay, this would

have been much nearer the mark; I will take either of them to work upon. Nail down the lid; cut a square hole in each of the longer sides of sufficient dimensions to admit the person, and put sliding doors thereto; to each of the other sides, a little above the centre of the panel, affix a pole about five feet in length; cover the whole with leather, or paint and varnish it, and you will have a very tolerable representation of a palki. It is borne upon the shoulders of four black men, who are bred to the office, and who perform their hard duty with astonishing activity and long-suffering. A *dák* stage is usually from 12 to 16 miles, and to perform this eight men only are requisite, and these relieve each other alternately about every quarter of a mile; but for the purpose of running about Calcutta, it is not necessary to employ more than four men.

The posture adopted by Europeans, when riding in a palki, is almost recumbent; but a native is most frequently to be seen sitting cross-legged, like a tailor; which latter is undoubtedly the more comfortable, or rather the less disagreeable of the two; for it is an execrable mode of travelling take it which way you will, and would be avoided by any person having the option

of riding in a wheeled vehicle, both on account of the abominable shaking and the slow rate of progression: the jog-trot averages about four miles an hour.

The bare walls and plaster flooring of an Indian barrack-room, I found to be anything but agreeable to my English notions of comfort; and having little predilection for the accommodations assigned me, I sallied forth in my palki, with a large packet of letters of introduction to persons resident in Calcutta. The first of these which I delivered was to a Civilian of many years' service, and it at once procured me a hospitable invitation to take up my abode in his establishment, until I should join my corps. When a young man, whatever profession he may have adopted, enters upon any untried scene of life, he is prompted, either by the ardour or suspicion natural to his temperament, to draw presumptions from every passing event, which can in any measure afford food for anticipation: every incident becomes matter for prognostication, and the inexperienced mind is apt to infer success or destruction to its best speculations from circumstances the most trivial and irrelevant.

When I had arrived at the house of the gentle-

man above alluded to, I sent up my card by one of the small multitude of servants collected round the entrance, and was presently ushered upstairs into the library, where I was left alone. I remained seated some time, in expectation of the gentleman's appearance, occupied in preconceptions as to his manner of receiving me. A quarter of an hour elapsed and no one being to the fore, I endeavoured to form some estimation of the lord of the mansion from the contents of his bookshelves; but I was fairly puzzled: not Byron himself, with all his boasted powers of discrimination and penetration of character, could have formed an opinion of this man's tastes.

The first book I hit upon was "Baxter's Saint's Rest;" Ah! he's religious of course. "The Devil on Two Sticks;" "Tom Paine;" bless me the man's a Deist. Then came "Paul Clifford," "Paley's Natural Theology." I confidently expected to find pencil notes in refutation, but though evidently well thumbed, the pages bore no comments. I took down the Peerage, it was clean and without a dog's ear; then running my eye over the labels I read in succession "Clerk's Heraldry," "Little Henry and his Bearer," "Strutt's Antiquities," "Mrs. Inchbald's Farces,"

"Mant's Bible," "A Treatise on the Resumption of Rent-free Tenures," and lastly, a knock-down blow to my hopes of an invite, "Tom Raw the Griffin." Ah! yes, the man had plainly a morbid antipathy to all younkers; he without doubt enjoyed beyond everything a good laugh at a greenhorn. Here I again reseated myself, in no very easy anticipation of the gentleman's appearance.

My eye next fell on the newspapers and periodicals. Ah! ha! thought I, here will be a faithful disclosure of the man's sentiments. "The Christian Observer." Well then he *is* religious after all. "Bell's Life in London," "Blackwood," "The Times," "The Sporting Magazine." Bah! the man has ——Enter mine host, by whom I was cordially received, and who having introduced me to his daughter, a young unmarried lady, invited me in the most hospitable manner to make one of his family, until I could equip myself for my military duties.

I returned to Fort William to sleep, as it was then too late to effect a removal of my baggage. After a somewhat more comfortable night's rest than that which I had enjoyed on my arrival at Madras, I had just seated myself at an uncomfortable-

looking late breakfast, when I received a visit from Howard, who had just been put in orders to proceed to Assam, having obtained a staff appointment. He was in high glee, and as usual full of anecdote. When I mentioned the invitation I had received, he instantly asked if there were any young ladies in the family. Being answered in the affirmative, he said: "Then I must put you on your guard; unless you are willing to become Benedict, you must be very careful how you pay any unmarried girl in India those attentions which good-breeding demands in society at home. I was myself placed in rather a strange predicament on my first arrival in Calcutta. I was invited to take up my quarters with an old staff officer, having an unmarried daughter in the house, a case nearly parallel with your own. The papa was the strangest little bird you ever beheld, a wee whipper-snapper bit of a man, fifty years of age, with grey hair, grey beard, grey eyes, grey skin, grey everything; having a most miserably blue-devilish or devilish-blue expression of countenance that burked every joke which rose to my lips. The girl, his daughter, was a diamond edition of her papa; such a little humpty dumpty piece of goods, certainly no more than

three feet six in height. Head large; face ditto; features pretty good; complexion blotted; hands and feet small, but still tending to the dumpty; eyes blue; hair yellow; expression silly and shy; manner ditto ditto; figure puffy; waist screwed small; bust none; bustle enormous. This is no caricature, my dear fellow," continued Howard, "but a faithful portrait of the young lady's person; and to this exquisite little oddity was I betrothed by report of all Calcutta. But I must tell you how it was.

"After the good Colonel had introduced me to his fair daughter, he having business to execute, left us *tête-à-tête*. I will give you a specimen of our conversation, in order that you may duly appreciate the lady's powers of fascination.

"'You have not been very long in India, Miss Fitz P.?'

"'No, sir.'

"'And have you yet succeeded in reconciling yourself to the climate, language, and mode of life?'

"'Yes, pretty well.'

"'The least agreeable part of Indian life appears to me to lie in the eternal round of

etiquette and never ending formalities, to which I am told all social comfort is compelled to give way; at least in the Presidency.'

"'Yes, I think so.'

"Yes, no, yes, no, one or other, was the extent of all that I could elicit from my little dumpling. The good colonel was scarcely more communicative, and during the meal of dinner scarcely half a dozen words were uttered by either of our trio—a very pleasant thing, no doubt, for those who brook not to have the business of mastication interrupted by idle discourse. We did speak, however, more than once, and the interesting formality of taking wine was judiciously enlivened by an occasional remark from mine host, as to the comparative merits of the several dishes.

"After tiffin, Fitz P. asked me if I should wish to drive out in the evening for an airing. I replied that I was anxious to conform as nearly as possible with the customs of the family; if they went out, I should wish to go too. 'Oh,' said he, 'I am far too great an invalid to move out during this part of the year, but my daughter takes her airing in the carriage every evening.' Five minutes afterwards he added, 'you can order my buggy

whenever you want to go anywhere;' but this I unfortunately understood to be when I wished to pursue a different route to Miss Fitz P., or if the carriage did not go out; so that when, in the cool of the evening, the sweet young lady made her appearance rustling down, all bonnet, and veil, and starched muslin, I offered my arm with my best bow, and begged to escort her to her carriage. Lightly we floated down the matted staircase, and gracefully did my beauty step into her barouche, as she assisted herself by laying one finger on my arm; I jumped in after her, and away we went for a drive up and down the Strand, where are to be seen all the fashionables of Calcutta, in their best equipages, and their gayest colours —*not* of complexion. The scene was sufficiently lively and varied, the promenade being so crowded with vehicles and equestrians of every denomination, as to make it a difficult job for black coachee to steer clear.

"I asked a thousand eager questions about this thing and that thing, this person and that person, until at last, finding that all my queries could extract from my intellectual companion nothing better than monosyllabic replies, I gave it up as a bad job, and held my peace, or contented myself

with ejaculations and essays upon the various uses to which I fancied this or that outlandish thing might be applied, in the vain hope of gradually reducing her reserve into something more communicative; but no, it would not do; all my eloquence was thrown away; the lady maintained strict silence, and I neither stood approved or corrected. All my charity vanished when I found that, instead of this awkward reserve being removed by further acquaintance, it grew daily more and more preposterous.

"I had been staying a week with the old colonel, when I received a *chit** from the captain of the ship in which I came out, who was a really good fellow, and a great crony of mine, congratulating me upon my approaching marriage, and expressing himself anxious lest I had been too hasty; he recommended me earnestly to consider the affair more maturely before I entered upon so irrevocable a change, concluding his note, 'If you are seriously determined upon getting spliced, you have my hearty good wishes for Mrs. H.'s and your own happiness; but take my advice, and consult the barometer once more before you make sail.' This was a perfect riddle to me;

* *Anglicè*, Note.

I could find neither head or tail to the affair, except by the supposition that some one had been hoaxing my friend. I wrote him an answer to that effect.

"Presently after the receipt of this note, tiffin was announced, and I took my seat at table, with as demure a face as I could assume, just opposite to my reputed bride. Soup had been removed when a note was handed to Colonel Fitz P.; he ran his eye over the contents; in a moment the expression of his countenance clouded; 'why, Howard,' said he, 'what have you been doing? surely there can be no foundation for this report, eh?' and he sent me the note for perusal; it ran thus:—

"'My dear Fitz:

"'I sincerely congratulate you upon Matilda's approaching nuptials, if you really think it matter of gratulation; it strikes me they are both too young, but of course the affair has been arranged with your consent, and you are the best judge. I cannot help intimating that, as the oldest and most anxious friend of your family, I feel somewhat annoyed at this news being brought to me by every person who calls; I think you might have

let me into the secret before publishing the banns.

"'Ever thine,

"'Mc. D.

"'P.S. I know Howard to be rather a wild young dog.'

"I was completely bewildered, and was about to speak, when the Colonel interrupted me, 'And I think friend Howard, that, as the girl's father, I too might have been let into the secret before the affair got wind all over Calcutta. Eh? Matilda, how's this? I had no idea there was anything afloat between you two.'

"'Upon my honour, Sir,' said I, 'I am utterly at a loss—it is certainly very strange, but here is a note I have but this moment received from Captain Gallant, the counterpart of Mc. D.'s;' and I handed him the note.

"'La, Pa, what is it?' enquired the young lady, with more of energy than I had hitherto seen displayed.

"Both the notes were given to her—poor girl! she simpered and blushed, and blushed and simpered.—'La, Pa, I knew how it would be; Mr. Howard always gets into the carriage when I drive out of an evening.'

" 'Ah! ha!' cried the old Colonel good humouredly, 'a pretty joke, truly; why don't you know, my dear fellow, that *carting* a girl, or riding out with her, is considered in India as a regular publication of the banns, just as good as having them asked in an English church? I thought you always went out in the Buggy, and faith you must do so in future, or Matilda will never get a husband.'

"The charming Matilda blushed and retired, and the match was broken off."

After some further instruction in the etiquette and practices of Anglo-Indian Society, my friend Howard withdrew, and I prepared for a visit of ceremony to Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Vice-President in Council, Lord William Bentinck, the Governor General, being in the Hymála Mountains. I was the bearer of letters of recommendation to Sir Charles, and was received by him with much courtesy and politeness, but he regretted that it was not in his power to be of any assistance to me in my profession; indeed we cannot help admiring that the big-wigs in office should preserve so much urbanity towards all the small fry who are in waiting with

recommendations of this kind from friends or no friends in England, since nearly every hopeful cadet or writer has one to present, with hopes of favour and promotion. I left Government-house, highly gratified, and richer than when I entered it by two puns, and an invitation to Sir Charles's monthly balls.

These balls and the re-unions, besides an occasional play at the amateur theatre, were the only public amusements going on at this time in Calcutta. The rooms in the Government-house are magnificent in their proportions, and the furniture is costly, though somewhat faded; and here, on the second Tuesday of every month, are to be seen all that are lovely, affected, and cruel in Calcutta.

I was, on my first entrance to the ball-room, literally dazzled with the firmament of lamps and eyes, the sparkling of diamonds, and the glittering of lace and bullion. In these days Calcutta was rich in beauty, and it was truly a treat to circle through at least a dozen couples of waltzers in giddy evolution at the same moment; or to watch the measured tread of four or five sets of quadrilles, all in motion at once. Verily, it was a sight to quicken the pulse, or kindle a sigh in the bosom of the veriest stoic. There was the all-

beautiful Mrs. H., whose " eyes are load-stars;" her sister, the pretty Miss K.; the reigning belle, Miss B., who, though by no means the fairest, was indisputably the most lovely and fascinating girl in the room. Then there was the pocket angel, Mrs. J. H., rejoicing in dimples and laughter; the brilliant Mrs. P.; the witty Mrs. M. Now gallopaded past the magnificent Mesdames P., exulting in figures and costume strikingly adapted to the Opera; and by no means last or least, the graceful and majestic Mrs. B., whose eye, so full of humour and merriment, whose pouting mouth so formed for kisses and scandal, and then her pretty elastic little foot, apparently unequal to the superincumbent weight of her stately form; it would not have crushed a fly, it pressed so lightly over the chalked boards.

The reports of champaign-corks, and soda-water-corks, and all other corks, kept up an incessant cannonade during the evening, until supper was announced; when Sir Charles offered his arm to the *Burra Beebi** present, and the company paired off to a splendid supper provided by our first-chop cooks, Gunter and Hooper.

The Reunions were a delightful sort of party; a

* Lady taking precedence.

mixture of fancy-dress ball, or masquerade, with drama and music: here might be seen "Sweet Anne Page," coquetting with an old-clothesman; the Great Mogul suing smiles from a Swiss dairy-maid, or a venerable friar waltzing with a Bohemian broom-girl.

Miss Roberts, in her "Scenes and Characteristics," has spoken in no very flattering terms of "the tarnished, faded, lustreless habiliments" exhibited by the ladies of Calcutta: far be it from me to contradict anything which may have been said by this lady in her spirited and clever book, where taste can be the only arbiter; but, with due submission to Miss Roberts' superior judgment, I cannot but feel that her opinion in this particular has been somewhat hastily formed. Had the assertion been made with regard to the Mofussil simply, I should have been better prepared to receive it, for certainly the finery displayed in the ball-rooms of the upper provinces can hardly boast the splendour which is to be met with in London. Cawnpore, properly Kahnpore, where Miss Roberts chiefly resided, is more particularly an illustration of all that is dowdy; but among the belles within the Maharatta-ditch, I mean those of the presidency, although the fashion be some six months in arrear

of the Parisian models, very many are superbly, exquisitely dressed, and in continual receipt of *fresh-and-fresh* wardrobes from London and Paris.

There are, I know, a vast number who are obliged to dress chiefly from the by-gone damaged contents of the box-wallah's *pittarra*, but even these, in nine cases out of ten, will employ Madame La Place or Mrs. Leach for a ball-dress, or otherwise refrain from attending public parties. Dowdies may be found in a Government-house party in the proportion of one in ten, and so they may at Almack's: in the Mofussil generally, they may, perhaps, form one moiety of the assembly; the rest are well-dressed women.

I trust these remarks may not be thought unwarrantable, as offered in opposition to the opinion of a lady; but I believe we men are allowed to have some taste in these matters: I can only regret that Miss Roberts's observations should have been made in so unhappy a scene as Cawnpore, to which place doubtless her strictures are particularly applicable.

As a residence, any part of Calcutta must be preferable to Fort William, or I was living there too short a time to discover its advantages, though I could enumerate a long list of items on the *per*

contra side, among which are foremost its intolerable heat, and the reflection from the white buildings all around; the want of air, the barracks being below the level of the ramparts; the everlasting bugle calls, and the practising of band instruments; the shouts of some jovial souls, carousing in the adjacent quarters, with a thousand-and-one nuisances equally abominable.

The gigantic crane, commonly called in India the adjutant, excites the notice and curiosity of all new arrivals. Except that the joints of the knee bend backward, instead of the contrary, the action and walk of these large birds is ludicrously like the measured gait of a decrepit old man, as he may be seen sauntering about with his hands under his tail coat pockets, and his bowed head turned inquisitively first on one side then the other. They take their flight in search of food, wheeling in regular circles round and round over the same space of ground repeatedly, so that nothing edible escapes their sight; they are seen promenading on the tops of all the buildings in Calcutta, or resting upon one leg, as motionless as images, upon the highest summits they can find.

They are constant waiters at the tables of those European soldiers who may take their meals out-

side the barracks, and laughable indeed are the tricks played upon these greedy birds. The moment a bone is thrown to them, the whole posse rush upon it, and a regular scuffle succeeds, in which bills and wings are used as weapons, and no very gentle blows are dealt; the scramble generally ends in two or more, who are fortunate enough to obtain a good grip, pulling and tugging in opposite directions, until the happy victor bolts the morsel entire.

This exceeding voracity is taken advantage of by the soldiers for their amusement, by tying a bone to a string, and then casting it to the bird; it is probably caught and swallowed before it can reach the ground, and thus the poor animal is taken prisoner, as of course the bone will not return as smoothly as it went down. On one occasion I saw two bones tied together by a strong cord, four or five yards in length, thrown to these birds; of course they were instantly secured by two happy individuals, who thus found themselves coupled together, the weakest being constrained to follow the steps of the more powerful, until he bethought him of flight, when, proving the swifter of the two, he led his persecutor a pretty flight all round the fort, though he was himself more than

once made to turn a summerset in the air by the resistance acting upon his head. So powerful is their flight, and so sharp are their enormous bills, that they might prove formidable antagonists to almost any quadruped. In 1821, a private soldier running hastily round an angle of one of the barracks, came suddenly in collision with an adjutant, and was spitted clean through the body by its beak; both were victims to this untimely meeting, for the violence of the concussion broke the bird's neck, and both fell dead upon the pavement.

Before I quitted the fort, I went to pay a visit to Vangricken, who had taken up his quarters in the Royal Barracks. He had just risen from his bed, and was still in his nightly habiliments, a picture of nervous excitement and mental debility which I shall not easily forget. His features were unusually swollen, and his eyes were red with watching through the greater part of the night. He sat at the foot of his couch, with his arms folded, his eyes fixed in abstraction, and the remnant of his mangled limb thrown out horizontally over the bedding, at an angle of forty-five from its more fortunate fellow. The moment he perceived me, his eye kindled with satisfaction, and, pointing to

a chair, he begged me to listen while he related an account of a vision which had driven rest from his pillow, and which now engrossed his every thought.

Soon after he had retired to bed the previous night, he had been visited by an angel from heaven, bearing a special command that he, Vangricken, should repair to a certain commercial gentleman in Calcutta, and from him demand in marriage his only daughter, Miss Y., whom the heavenly messenger assured him should become the mother of a Saviour upon a new principle; one who should point out a new road to the celestial world, the old way being, he said, a little out of date, and in these days of reform considered somewhat roundabout. All this the poor maniac related to me with the utmost gravity, and no small increase of consequence in his manner, on the score of the immense importance of the commission assigned to him.

He was evidently deeply and fearfully under the influence of the dream, and it would have been utter folly to have argued its absurdity, or in any way to have thwarted the inclination of his fancy. I acquiesced in all his views upon the subject, but ventured to intimate that he should defer his

visit to the gentleman until he should be favoured with some further development of the plan, and of the manner in which it should be accomplished. He regarded me suspiciously at first, but did not eventually object to delay the prosecution of the affair for at least a day or two, and when I took my leave, I had the satisfaction of seeing him much more tranquil than when I had first entered.

A day or two afterwards, however, I learnt that this composure had been all assumed, his suspicion having been aroused by my advice; he lost not a moment after my departure in repairing to Mr. Y's office, for the purpose of entering upon the affair at once. On his arrival at the gentleman's establishment he was informed by a clerk, that Mr. Y. had not yet arrived, and would probably be found at his own house. Vangricken then enquired if the gentleman had a daughter.

"O yes, Sir," replied the clerk.

"Is she pretty?" enquired the eager Vangricken.

"Really Sir, I am no judge in these matters, but I believe Miss Y. is accounted handsome by most people."

"She is not black, eh?"

"Miss Y.?—no, indeed, Sir!"

"Ah, well, it's of no consequence—I will call upon Mr. Y. I have just received the injunction of the Almighty to demand Miss Y. as a wife; so that you will excuse my having troubled you with these questions."

Vangricken found Mr. Y. and his daughter, seated over the remnants of a late breakfast; and without any preamble, he entered at once upon the object of his visit. Mr. Y. listened to him most attentively, and to the terror of his astonished daughter, betrayed neither surprise or indignation at this extraordinary overture. The madman watched with jealous scrutiny the effect of his proposal upon each of his auditors; the young lady was frightened almost into hysterics at the idea of the wooden leg, as she saw her father coolly deliberating upon the matter, as though he were really persuaded of its importance; at least, it was evident that he was by no means inclined to laugh at the proposal, or treat the visitor as a madman.

Poor girl! she became very seriously alarmed, and was about to quit the room, when her father spoke. "Major Vangricken, this matter is truly one of paramount interest and extreme delicacy; now we must venture upon no conclusions without very mature deliberation. My love, do not leave

the room; your presence will most probably be required. You will excuse me half a minute, my dear Sir, I have a note of some consequence to answer, and having got that off my mind, I shall be the better able to give my undivided attention to the subject in question."

The note of consequence was quickly written, and dispatched to the general hospital, for half a dozen *he* fellows, accustomed to the charge of maniacs. As soon as the note had been sent off, Mr. Y. entered fully upon the subject of his daughter's marriage, and they were just about to fix a day for the nuptials, when two European keepers, with a small train of able-bodied blacks, marched into the room, and impiously carried off the celestial bridegroom.

After this melancholy display of his malady, he was detained in confinement until the Medical Board thought fit to send him home again to England, there being no chance of his recovery under the maddening influence of a tropical climate.

If every one else had been silent upon the subject there might have been no little amusement both to the reader and myself in visiting the lions of the Presidency; but, thanks to the encreasing spread of letters, all these things have been written upon

and read, and read and written upon, until Government House, Lall Digghi, the Suddur Bazaar, and the Auction rooms are as familiar to the good people of England as London Exchange or Regent Street. A whole volume might be filled in sketching the public measures and private characters of men in office and men out of office in Calcutta, but more than sufficient information of this kind may be found floating down the stream of periodical publications into the ocean of general information.

A thousand new conceits are impressed upon the mind of the traveller recently arrived in Calcutta, both in matters of observation and matters of opinion; but the colouring of these it is not possible to convey to the mind of the reader by minute description, or any labored delineation of the constituent parts of the picture. The points of the composition alone can be offered to him, and even they must be engraved upon his attention by a gradual process, while the same ideas are stamped at once upon the conception of an actual beholder. Had I started with my reader from the top of Gungoutri Peak in the Hymálas, to drag him through all the native cities in the Upper Provinces, refusing to converse with him

in any tongue but Hindostani, because no other language is spoken among the inhabitants, instead of introducing him by regular progression into the scenes which gradually opened to my own view on my first arrival, I could hardly have expected him to feel interested in my wanderings or to have continued long in my company. A free rendering of what is to be gathered by the way is, I think, my best hope of giving a faithful impression of the tone and spirit prevading both the country and community of India.

After living about a month in the hospitable mansion of the kind friend who had received me in Calcutta, I joined my corps, and commenced my military duties at Dum Dum, as a cadet of artillery.

CHAPTER VI.

DUM DUM.

Dum Dum (the name signifies a heavy gun-battery) is situated seven miles N.E. of Calcutta, and has for many years been the head-quarters of the Artillery regiment. Previously to its becoming a regular station it was annually occupied by the corps during the cold season, as an encampment and practice-ground, and there were then only two or three small temporary bungalows on the site of the present handsome cantonment. The men were marched up from Fort William in October, and continued in camp until February, when they again returned to their permanent quarters.

There are now cantoned at Dum Dum one troop of European horse artillery, six companies of European foot artillery, and seven companies of native foot artillery, besides gun-lascars, (a species of native powder-monkey), and a vast establishment

of natives in the magazine and other works of the station. The Europeans are in all, officers included, about seven hundred.

Some few years since, before Lord William Bentinck arrived in India at the head of the government, this station was proverbially known for its gaiety and jovial hospitality: but here, as elsewhere, throughout all India, the glorious days of mirth and revelry have passed away, and the brilliant assemblies once so frequent at our mess-house, have dwindled down to the scanty meeting of a few spirit-broken half-starved subalterns. A meagre lustreless dinner-party or ball, upon some extraordinary occasion—such as Lord William's departure from the country—may perhaps flicker up with a sickly attempt to display what Dum Dum once was; but there is now no life, no spirit of mirth to stir the company, and what was formerly a delight becomes a bore. The why and the how, in this case, are easily answered; we have had our wings clipped so closely, that we are now fain to walk slowly upon the ground over which we used to fly.

Dum Dum possesses a neat little church, with sittings for about twelve hundred; but there is one thing which struck me as being peculiarly

infelicitous about this little place of holy worship: it is situated very close to the mess-house, and the enclosures are separated only by a low parapet wall, so that nearly all which passes in the one may be audible in the other. I have often at the mess, heard the organ pealing forth the solemn notes of the old hundredth psalm, at the same moment that some man at my elbow has been whistling, 'Malbrook,' or 'Oh dear what can the matter be.' Independently of this inconvenience, there is, in my mind at least, a strong objection to so close a propinquity between that which is strictly and entirely sacred, and that which is devoted exclusively to the gratification of our appetites and animal indulgences.

I do not at all apprehend that the same feelings would very sensitively operate with the majority of our military chaplains in India; on the contrary, although I am right happy to admit that there are very many zealous and highly estimable Christian ministers in our service, still, if by their fruit ye shall know them, I fear that by no means the smaller moiety would be found to have their hearts set upon the good things of this world, rather than the importance of their spiritual duties; and very many among my ecclesiastical acquaint-

ances would as readily have tallyhoed a jackall, found within the sacred precincts of the church-yard, as if he had been unhoused from some less sanctified spot. That we have upon our establishment a very long list of "sporting parsons," is well known both to the bishop and to the community generally; and though I should be sorry indeed to speak with levity, or inconsiderately in disparagement of the sacred profession, yet the fact above stated is too notorious to call for any reserve on my part in mentioning it.

Illustrative of the opinion I have just advanced, I could instance a great many anecdotes; I will, however, content myself with the following. I had been invited to attend the marriage ceremony of a young friend of mine at the house of the bride's parents, where a splendid breakfast had been prepared for the guests. The nuptials were to be performed at eleven o'clock, after which all hands were expected to fall-to upon the abundance of good cheer. The hour appointed came, and all were present, with the exception of the priest who was to tie the indissoluble knot; this was scarcely wondered at, for our clerical friend was known to be a man of late hours, and never punctual to an engagement; but when half an hour

had elapsed, and still no chaplain came, the party grew somewhat impatient of delay: twelve o'clock struck, and still he failed to appear; the poor bride cried twice as much as ever, and all the impatient bride's-maids became doubly agitated.

It was really a very strange thing of Mr. ——; quite unpardonable, and the breakfast would all be spoilt; a blank disquietude with whispering conjectures ensued, until I proposed to gallop over to the parson's quarters, and bring him back with me. This was acceded to, and upon arrival at the gentleman's bungalow, I enquired for the *Padri Sahib*, and was answered by one of his servants, "*Khodawund, Padri Sahib shikar khelna geiya hi*," which being interpreted, signifieth, "Great sir, (literally, chosen of God), the parson has gone out hunting."

I concluded at once that the oblivious divine had forgotten the wedding altogether, and galloped back again to give intelligence to the party. Just as I rode in at one gate, however, in dashed the little chaplain at the other, dressed in a green hunting-coat, leathers, and tops, cracking his whip, and cheering his dogs, "Harmony! Harmony! Music! Rattler! Rattler!" He galloped up under the portico, with a hundred regrets that he should

be so late, but they had really had a clipping run of five and forty minutes, "the best thing of the season," he continued: "might have covered the dogs with a table-cloth; but upon my word I'm very late; half-past twelve, upon my honour—Here, you bearer," calling one of his servants who was in waiting with a partial change of apparel, "*Kala pantaloon our koorti do,*" and seizing a pair of black trowsers from his slave, he hastily jumped into them, top-boots, leathers, and all; then making a similar change in the upper part of his dress, he put on his surplice, and walked deliberately into the room where the expectant party were assembled, making a cool apology to the lady of the house, on the score of unavoidable business of the greatest importance, which had detained him beyond his appointment.

But I must back to Dum Dum; such anecdotes as the foregoing are hardly scarce enough to render a second desirable. The Magazine and the Model-room are worthy of the inspection of a visitor who has any interest in such things. The Theatre, once a handsomely appointed house, is now degraded into a Five's-court for the soldiers, and affords an excellent illustration of the decay of our gaieties; but then, again, by-the-bye, upon

the other hand, the officers of the regiment, led by their ever generous commandant, have lately erected a very capital Racket-court.

The Barracks are spacious and excellent, both in their structure and accommodation: they are built in a quadrangle of about a hundred and fifty yards square, and in the rear are a Roman Catholic Chapel and the Horse Artillery Stables, with large tanks of water used by the men for bathing. An excellent hospital and school add very greatly to the comfort of the soldiers and their families.

Besides these and other public buildings, the cantonment consists of about thirty well-built, commodious bungalows, as the residences of the officers. These are built upon a plan adapted to the climate, being very open and without passages; so that each room has communication with its adjacent one by at least two or three doors, which it is usual to close only by thin blinds formed of very fine slips of bamboo, tied together sufficiently close to exclude all insects, without obstructing the free circulation of air; these are called *cheeks*. There are gardens attached to all these bungalows, and at a convenient distance from the dwelling, are the stables, servants'-huts, and

offices of the *cuisine*, together with storehouses and a variety of other accommodation. An almost invariable appendage also to these gardens, or *compounds*, as they are styled in India, (the word being a corruption from the Portuguese *campana*,) is a large reservoir of water, which is very useful both for the purposes of irrigation and, when kept cleanly, as a bath.

The regimental mess-house is large, and very tastefully decorated and furnished; it possesses one of the finest libraries in the country, rich in military literature, and having among its volumes a great many very choice and rare works of science and history; moreover, it is liberally furnished with mathematical, astronomical, chemical, and other useful instruments, as also with drawings, engravings, charts, plans, &c., and has a regular supply of most of the leading periodicals.

For the lovers of military band-music, the head-quarters of the corps will have a charm in the regimental band, which is still perhaps the finest in India, although of late years it has much deteriorated, in consequence of the loss of some of its ablest performers. It would appear that, in such a climate as that of India, the eternal puffing and blowing ne-

cessary for the wind instruments very quickly induces pulmonary diseases; so that when any man undertakes to spend his breath in a trombone, serpent, or other such instrument, he is actually selling the tail-end of his life for the recompense of a slight increase in his monthly salary, during the short period that he may hope to be able to hold his wind; and then, knowing that the span of this commuted existence must be very limited, he comes to the determination of making his short life a merry one, and drinks like a sponge. However, let the most sober fellow, a member of the Temperance society, take a trombone or bass-horn into a temperature of 96° Fahrenheit, and there let him puff away even for a short half-hour, and he shall assuredly rise from his employment very much inclined to moisten his parched pipes with something more generous than the pure element.

During the season of the monsoon, Dum Dum, and the whole neighbourhood, are so completely inundated, that a small *dingi* * may be paddled from the cantonment to the salt-water lakes, or to the Sundurbunds, and thence into the open ocean, which is distant something more than one

* Native boat.

hundred miles. This may appear very strange, and the more so from the vicinity of the Ganges, whose channel might be expected to carry off the flood, as it does not here overflow its banks; but when the profusion of a tropical rain is recollected, and its continuance, the fact is not so surprising.

At Dum Dum, in 1831, the heavens did not cease, during a space of one hundred and forty hours, to pour down without intermission a deluge of water, as if the flood gates had been a second time opened for destruction. Still the station is not an unhealthy one, that is, not more so than most parts of the lower provinces of the Bengal presidency, and many persons have found its situation more favourable to their health than most other places. Among horses, however, there has more than once been a strange epidemic, by which vast numbers have fallen victims to an inscrutable disease, which leaves no traces of its work upon the carcase, and which affords no time for attempts at remedy; it has been attributed to exhalations, wet fodder, &c., all equally unsatisfactory; for were it any of these, how comes it that, at other times, during the rainy season, the troop horses have been in excellent order, and the hos-



SCENE IN DUM-DUM BAZAAR.

channel might be

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SCENE IN DUM-DUM BAZAAR.

pital stables occupied only by *bursautti* * cases and common casualties. This, however, has been very rare, and, generally speaking, Dum Dum is not reckoned an unhealthy situation for cattle.

It is customary in India, particularly among young men, to rise with the day. The moment rosy-fingered Aurora is seen peeping over the mango-grove, or the top of the cook-house, up comes Bolaki Dass, the sirdar-bearer, and arouses his lord from his morning slumbers. First he essays a gentle call, "*Sahib! Sahib!*" but receiving no reply, good Bolaki is convinced that his master is lazy, and approaching a step nearer to

* *Bursautti* is a disease of the horse peculiar to India; it takes its name from the Hindostani word *bursaut*, heavy rain, from the circumstance of its making its appearance upon cattle during the rainy season only. It shows itself in a small spot or scabby sore, commencing about the heels, and breaking out upon the legs and fore-arms, particularly where there has previously been a sore blemish. There are numerous quack remedies prescribed for the disease, but no cure has yet been discovered for it. A good grind across country is perhaps the best recipe after all; in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, more good will be done by hard work than by all the applications in the Vet.'s dispensary. It is an arbitrary disease; a horse subject to it may not show it during a whole season, and the next year he may be as bad as ever; some horses never have it at all; others that have been half-priced in consequence, lose it suddenly; all doubtless dependent, not on treatment, but constitution. Many horses lose the affection by removal to the Upper Provinces, and those who have suffered it in the Upper Provinces may lose it when sent to the Lower; it is in no way to be calculated upon. The sores disappear at the cessation of the rains, leaving a bare spot in the place. It is understood in India that a *bursauttied* horse cannot be deemed sound, though I have known them work quite as well as if they had been entirely free from the disease.

the bed, he again endeavours to "quicken into life" his sleeping lord, with a gradually increasing emphasis, as he finds his repeated efforts unavailing; "*Sahib! Khodawund!! Outea Ap!!! Ub tōp duggega:*" "Sir, great Sir, chosen-of-God, be pleased to arise, presently the morning gun will fire:" and so on the praiseworthy Bolaki perseveres in a regular *crescendo*, until a faint impression is effected upon the sluggish senses of the sleeper, of which he takes advantage and brings him to the knowledge of a new day.

Buxoo, the *khidmutgar* (table attendant), now makes his appearance with a cup of smoking coffee and light for a cigar, and in the rear comes Kurreim Buccus, the *säes* (groom), to know upon which horse it will delight the protector of the poor (*Gurreebpurwan*) to take his morning ride.

Master turns out of bed, still more than half disposed to slumber on; he throws himself into a large easy chair, to discuss his coffee and a whiff of choice Virginia, or Manilla; while the assiduous Bolaki employs himself in gently brushing to and fro his master's hair, and Gungoo carefully indues the stockings, after having performed the office of a grateful ablution upon the nether members of his luxurious lord. Thus gently and

deliberately proceeds the business of the toilet, until the gentleman is completely equipped for parade, or for a gallop across country. In the latter case, perhaps Boxer, Shigram, or Rattler, may be permitted to take an airing also, for every young man in India retains, as a part of his fixed establishment, at least half a dozen rips of the canine tribe.

Ere the sun has been half an hour above the horizon, the rider is glad to return to some less violent pursuit, and taking Gungoo, the mate bearer, carrying a large *chatta* (umbrella), to protect him from the ripening rays of the sun, he will probably saunter for an hour to inspect the compound and stables; this pleasant occupation is performed in a most comfortable dishabille, which would not a little shock the delicacy of a visitor fresh from England.

Perhaps the beauty of the morning, or the humour of the individual, may suggest a bath in the tank, for the sake of a swim, or a ride upon a *mussuk*, which is a bag used by water-carriers to hold water; it is formed of an entire sheep-skin, and when inflated, may be bestridden in the water like a horse, by one expert in the management of it. Should the rider, however, through want of

skill or other cause, lose, in the least, command of his equilibrium, he is instantly immersed, mouth foremost, in the water.

The languor induced by this exercise will render a couple of hours' repose upon a couch exceedingly fascinating, and then more coffee and more tobacco will possibly be consumed, and bachelor-visitors, habited in a style showing a special disregard of vulgar prejudices, will from time to time drop in, to hear or circulate the latest news, or the most recent scandal. Parties thus formed of idle bachelors, are termed levees, and are undeniably the pools in which are spawned and brought to life all the countless varieties of tales and scandalous reports, which form a breed of animalculi indispensible in the element which supports life in the Anglo-Indian community.

At about ten o'clock, a second and more elaborate toilet is performed, and breakfast is usually taken at eleven o'clock, or before noon; unless a court-martial, committee, or other military duty, should require earlier hours, in which case an effort must be made, as business is usually commenced at ten o'clock. The occupation of the time from breakfast until tiffin, must necessarily depend upon the taste or inclination of the individual; music, draw-

ing, reading, or the like, will have attractions for the one, while the other will prefer a rubber of billiards, or a stroll to the dog-kennel and the stables; perhaps a round of visits may be made the order of the day, more especially if there be any fresh bit of scandal to retail, or minutes of recent English news to propagate, or surest attraction of all, a newly-arrived spinster to be exhibited; such inducements as these will lead men to run, from house to house, all over the station, gossiping and dropping mischief at each dwelling they enter.

Tiffin is usually brought on table about two o'clock, and consists principally of light viands, or at most a curry moistened with a glass or two of good claret or madeira; after which meal, smoking, a few glasses of weak brandy and water, and perhaps a nap, conduce much to the supposed happiness of many. As the sun approaches the horizon in the West, good Bolaki again summons his master to the duties of the toilet, and parade perhaps must be attended, or the sparkling eyes of some pretty coquette may by chance invite the young rider to caper beside her equipage, and chatter for her amusement. As the shadows of evening lengthen, the several carriages and equestrians assemble round the band, to barter the

occurrences of the day, and sell without price the characters of their dearest friends. At half-past seven or eight o'clock, the bugle calls to mess, and here good cheer and excellent wines allure the fastidious palate, and the lazy appetite is sometimes tickled into good humour by the variety of piquant dishes covering the table.

Miss Roberts, to the correct colouring of whose pictures in general I most cheerfully bear testimony, has given a spirited sketch of an Indian dinner-table, such as it existed some eight or ten years since, and of the terrible slaughter which must necessarily have been committed among the sheep, oxen, and poultry, before such a meal could be brought upon the table. But the era of half-batta has led to a complete reform in this as well as in most other domestic arrangements; and where an ox was formerly slain, cut up, and sent in joints to the board, by the hands of a continued string of attendants, stretching from the cook-house to the dining-room, a good fat capon, or a kid, perhaps a lamb, is now sacrificed and served up as the more substantial part of the meal; while the sides or the interstices of the table are spread with a diversity of made dishes, both in the French style, and according to the multifarious recipes in

vogue among oriental epicures, such as the whole infinity of curries, *kawabs*, *pilaus*, *koormas*, *kouftuhs*, &c.; for the languor induced by the excessive heat of the climate, renders the appetite too sluggish to be excited by plain food, and provocatives are therefore sought in that which is most highly seasoned with every sort of native and foreign condiment.

Solid joints are certainly to be seen at each end of a mess-table, or at any numerously attended board, where they form a necessary ornament, and are a perquisite in most cases to the *kahnsuma*, or head of the *cuisine*, who will, after they are removed from table, dispose of them to the European soldiers, or lowest castes of natives, among whom he finds ready purchasers; but in provision for a family party such abuses no longer exist. The extravagances formerly practised in this department of house-keeping are now abolished, and the *ménage* is no longer left at the discretion of the *kahnsuma*, but is more generally under the immediate scrutiny and superintendence of the lady of the house.

A bachelor's establishment is too narrow a field for any very extensive impositions in this branch of expenditure, and does not call for so much

management; but even here a reformation has been wrought, to the banishment of square joints and plain cookery. True it is, that our tables are more bountifully supplied than is always the case in old England; and for this there is a necessity. Those who live much in society, or have a large circle of acquaintance, know not exactly how many guests may take their seats unbidden at the meal, the system of hospitality practised in India being upon a much more open and liberal footing than in most countries. This latter remark is applicable to the Mofussil rather than to the Presidency; especially since the establishment of hotels in the latter.

The Upper Provinces possess no such accommodation for the traveller or new arrival, so that people become dependent on each other's hospitality for board and lodging; that is, unless they happen to be marching with their tents and retinue; the consequence is, that every man's house, more particularly if it be situated in a place of great resort or thoroughfare, becomes a kind of 'Red Lion' to the travelling community, and way-farers as well as one's own immediate friends are continually dropping in without notice. Nor is a visit of this sort looked upon by either

party as an intrusion, for the addition of even four or five in a family is scarcely felt as any inconvenience: there is no turning the house upside down for the reception of the comers, and no difficulty in accommodating them. The spread is sufficient, if prepared only for a subaltern and his wife, and the visitor pays for his entertainment by telling his latest news, and all the gossip which he has brought from the places he has just left.

The providing of beds for the travellers is by no means a difficult matter, for in a country like India, where men are continually upon the move, they speedily learn not to be over-scrupulous in this respect, and go without grumbling to a shake-down on the mattress of their palki, or the superior luxury of the first couch which offers itself.

But I have been long absent from the mess-table, where, if I remember rightly, I had just taken my seat when I was led away by Miss Roberts and domestic economy; however, little remains to be told of the further employment of the hours, until Boláki again makes his appearance at his master's bed-side, with his execrable "*Sahib! Sahib!!*" It may as well be mentioned,

that deep drinking and late hours are very much exploded from society in India. By half-past ten or eleven o'clock, the mess-house will generally be found empty; though occasionally, 'tis true, the small hours of the morning will surprise a few excited lads over a rubber of whist and an anchovy toast.

This is a pretty general outline of the routine of a young military man's life in India, if life it can be called: notwithstanding its monotony, there is much in it that is agreeable, though much also which is far otherwise. There is, if I may so express myself, a want of attraction, or rather of adhesion between the individual members of Anglo-Indian society, which is sensibly felt by such as have not their own family connexions about them; the links of the community do not hang together by any closer bond than that of mere acquaintance.

The constant change among the residents at a station, which is caused by the frequent relief of corps, renders India a very quicksand to friendships; no sooner do people know each other sufficiently to appreciate and value one another, than, by the removal of one party, the partiality which would probably have ripened into a warmer senti-

ment, is dissolved, and new companions are substituted. In this state of things, there is nothing upon which the affections and best feelings of the heart can repose, and a young man who, in quitting England, very probably left behind him all that was dear to him in the world, is thus thrown back upon the hollow resources of an idle community, unless he happily possess springs of more solid pleasures within himself.

A Sub's life in India is, if I may be allowed the use of an antithesis, an arduous, though idle servitude, and the remuneration is slender indeed, though a happy provision for a starving man. With a stipend which would afford every comfort in England, a subaltern in India can seldom manage to pay his tailor's bill, because there are so many unavoidable expenses in what would be deemed luxuries at home; whereas in a tropical climate they are only necessaries—indispensables.

Unless a man should have property besides his pay, marriage is absolutely out of the question, by reason of the *little consequences* which may naturally be expected; unless, indeed, the young lady, which is very rarely the case in the Indian market, have a *silver teapot*, and a kit to match, together with a small pin-money purse of her

own; or lest one or other of the youthful pair should have good expectations of the needful *in prospectu,* and can submit to live from hand to mouth in the interim, deaf or indifferent to all duns and sheriff's writs.

In one respect the young officers residing at Dum Dum enjoy a valuable advantage over those who are cantoned at out-stations. The place itself is quiet, and if a man be desirous of husbanding his scanty means, he may be as retired as the heart of a hermit could wish, without losing caste among his brother officers; and then if he love society better than pelf, he is within half-an-hour's drive of all the gaiety and revelling of the Presidency: whereas in stations where the community are dependent upon each other for sport and diversion, every individual is expected to lend his aid and co-operation in what is going forward, or otherwise he will be looked upon as a mere cipher, and be shut out from all social intercourse and fellowship with his brother officers.

CHAPTER VII.

JUGGURNAUT.

In December 1831, I obtained a temporary leave of absence from my corps, and started on an excursion to Poori, and the temple of the celebrated Juggurnaut. I took my passage in "The Ganges" steamer, not a little delighted to escape from the monotony of cantonment life. The weather was very cold, bitter indeed to our broiled constitutions, the thermometer being as low as 52° 30′ Fahrenheit. On quitting old England, how little did I anticipate feeling such bracing air again until my return home: I could scarcely believe myself to be in a tropical climate, which is familiar to the fancy of most persons as a land of incessant *coup-de-soleil* and drought.

We had a very pleasant party on board, and were handsomely entertained by our skipper, whose urbanity and attention to his passengers won him universal esteem. We were not long in

company, however, for on the third day, after getting under weigh, having experienced some stiffish weather along the coast, we hove in sight of Juggurnaut the terrible.

Juggurnaut is one of the euphonious titles of the preserving deity, Vishnu, and signifies "supreme in the world." The temple stands in the ancient town of Poori, or Pursottem, upon the coast of Orissa, which is of all other coasts the most sterile in appearance, being a mere succession of sand-hills, without a single blade of vegetation to refresh the eye. The city itself is not visible from the sea, but on the N.E. side of the temple is a small collection of white bungalows, which form the European station, and these from their very low walls and high conical roofs appear half-buried in the sandy beach: they, however, enjoy the luxury of the same sea breeze as is found so grateful at Madras. The surf along this coast is quite as tremendous as at Madras, and *massulah* boats of a similar construction are used for landing.

The temple is situated in latitude 19° 50′ N. and longitude 86° 5′ E., about sixteen or eighteen miles N.E. from the Chilka Lake, and the same distance S.W. from Kanarak, the celebrated Black Pagoda. It forms a valuable landmark to mari-

ners, there being no distinctive object for many miles along the coast, except the Black Pagoda above-mentioned, which frequently misleads the seaman, being very like a vessel under weigh, when seen in the distance. Juggurnaut is thus described by Abul Fazil, the historian and poet in the court of the Emperor Akbur, in the sixteenth century.

"In the town of Pursottem, on the borders of the sea, stands the great temple of Jagnaut; within it are the images of Krishna (Vishnu), Balarám (Mahadhu or Siva,) and Subhádra, (Kalli); these are made of sandal-wood, and tradition reports them to be 4,000 years old."

These three idols are merely rough busts of the figures intended to be represented, having neither arms nor any sculpture of the body, and the faces being absurdly grotesque, both in form and painting. The cars in which they are drawn are fifty or sixty feet in height, and bedaubed with paint.

Vishnu is the preserving power in Hindu mythology, and is most commonly represented as having a serpent in his grasp, extended over his head, and reaching to the ground; and the god is trampling upon the head of the reptile: a very beautiful and curious corroboration of our great

primœval tradition. Mahadhu, or Siva, is the destroying deity, and is drawn with a serpent about his head, in the form of a hood: and the third idol, Subhádra, or Kalli, is the female form of Mahadhu, at whose blood-stained altar thousands became voluntary victims, until the practice was suppressed by the humane exertions of our government and the zealous missionaries.

Since the year 1821, not a single instance of self-immolation has taken place at Juggurnaut, and for two or three years previous to that date only three examples had occurred, one of which was accidental, and the other two victims gladly embraced death as a happy escape from loathsome and intolerable disease. It is scarcely possible to account for the gross misrepresentations which are daily imported into England. Most true it is, that for many miles around the temple, the sides of the roads are whitened with the bones of devotees who have perished by the way-side: for if a Hindu has reason to believe dissolution at hand, he forthwith collects his remaining strength to make the journey towards Juggurnaut, and should he fortunately succeed in dragging his diseased carcase within sight of the sacred edifice, he will lie him down in peace,

and there die with a perfect confidence of future bliss; and then, again, thousands set out upon the pilgrimage, whose subsistence fails them by the way, and starvation ultimately terminates their wretched existence.

The grand festival occurs in the month of March, when the moon is of a certain age, after the sun has entered Aries; and during this period, the atmosphere around the place frequently becomes so tainted and impure, that were the concourse suffered to continue, a pestilence would be the inevitable result: there is, therefore, a limit set to the ceremonies, at the expiration of which time the pilgrims must take their departure; this is effected by allowing those who have purchased their *entrée* to the temple, only a certain duration for their religious worship, according to their rank and the price paid for admission. It is really a revolting reflection, that a christian government should derive a revenue from the tax paid by heathens for the worship of their idols. This, however, has been happily abolished by the terms of the recent renewal of the Charter, though I have reason to believe that the practice had not been discontinued when I quitted India—why so I am not informed.

The most striking portion of the temple is of a high conical form, which is anything but elegant, although it is curious, from the enormous mass of masonry of which it is composed, and interesting from its grotesque proportions. It is built of coarse red granite, very rudely sculptured in devices so grossly indecent that no lady can approach it; in height it is two hundred feet. All around this tower are innumerable other sacred buildings, belonging to the temple, of the same material and similarly decorated.

The principal entrance is towards the east, where is a handsome gateway, from which a flight of stairs leads into the more secret parts of the building: just within this doorway is a gigantic statue of a bull, and around the walls are colossal representations of birds, beasts, and demons, of every form and denomination. On the east side, but south of the entrance just mentioned, is a beautiful pillar, of very large dimensions, entirely of one solid block of black marble; in sculpture it is more highly finished than are the walls of the temple, but the designs are equally obscene.

This celebrated place of heathen worship is said to have been erected by Rajha Bheem Deo, at the close of the twelfth or the commencement of the

thirteenth century. It is said that, in the middle of the last century, (I have forgotten the exact date,) in the reign of Shuja-ud-deen, an attack was made upon the temple by the Rajha of Pursottem, and that he succeeded in carrying off the image of Vishnu: this sacrilegious theft was performed in spiteful retaliation against Shuja-ud-deen for some indignity offered to the Rajha, and for an unpalatable decision in a case of disputed property. The Rajha managed to retain possession of the idol for the space of three years, during which time Shuja-ud-deen suffered a loss in revenue to the amount of twelve lahks of rupees annually, that is an aggregate sum in English money of £360,000 sterling, this being the amount of pilgrim tax lost by the absence of the image from the temple.

The province of Orissa was captured by the English from the Maharhattas in 1802-4, since which time the pilgrim tax is said to have yielded the government an average revenue of nearly a lahk and a half of rupees, about £15,000, annually, net profit; cost and expenditures in repairs, establishment, and contingencies, having been deducted.

The town of Poori is mean and dirty, consisting chiefly of low black-looking brick buildings, partly besmeared with plaster, and long ranges of

serais or places of accommodation for the pilgrims, one stall of which may be taken possession of by any new arrival. These *serais*, which are common all over India as places of rest to the traveller, are scarcely more than a succession of recesses behind small arches, which form the doors to the apartments, giving accommodation in the native fashion (that is, packed like pigs in a market-basket) to four or five persons; though any occupant may claim the exclusive right of possession for the space of one month.

Some of the natives' houses within the town are of handsome design, though almost buried in filth and accumulated rubbish; however, by far the greater proportion of the houses are mere huts. On the north side of the town are several very extensive tanks or reservoirs of water, built entirely of masonry, with stone steps leading to the bottom all around; some of these are said to be very deep, and they are used by the natives for the purposes of ablution; multitudes are seen collected upon the banks, washing their apparel, or going through the different ceremonies of worship, bowing to the ground, lifting the hands in an attitude of supplication, standing during prayer upon one foot, with the hands joined before them, turning round and

round, then salaaming down to the ground, or scattering sacred flowers upon the water, while muttering their petitions. All this forms an interesting picture, though scarcely so brilliant in effect as in many other parts of India, from the circumstance that coloured clothing is not so much in vogue in these districts as in the provinces more to the north and west.

I visited these scenes upon an elephant, which gave me the advantage of a good command of observation; on horseback, it would not be possible to penetrate into many places where an elephant is allowed to pass, simply because the natives can offer no effectual bar without open resistance, which they would not venture to resort to, unless any of their positive rights or religious prejudices were infringed, in which case the violater would find little mercy in the hands of these bigoted devotees.

One question naturally arose in my mind, in connexion with this extraordinary place of Hindu sanctity; how did it possibly escape demolition in the hands of the Mohummedans, after their conquest of the whole district? In all other places which fell within their grasp, they neglected not to display the rancour of their bigotry in the destruction

or disfigurement of all temples and other public monuments of Hindu worship. Take Benares as an example; the mosque, now so prominent an object in that Hindu city, was erected by the Emperor Aurungzebe, upon the site of a very beautiful and peculiarly sacred Hindu temple, which in his religious wrath he overthrew, converting the ruins into a foundation for the present edifice. However, though the whole province of Orissa was in captivity to the Mohummedans, we have no direct proof that Poori itself was occupied by them; yet, again, it is natural to suppose that so sacred a place, the deposit of so much wealth, would have been a first object for a despoiling army. In support of these hypotheses I have but one fact to offer: Hindu manners, customs, ceremonies, and traditions, exist here and in the neighbouring districts in much greater purity than in any other part of Bengal; does not this circumstance justify the inference that the Moslems did not occupy the town?

Kanarak, more commonly known as the Black Pagoda, stands about eighteen miles to the N.E. of Poori, and presents one of the most extraordinary and incomprehensible of ancient ruins to be met with in the whole of India. Its dimensions

are pro-di-giously gigantic, and the coarse black marble of which it is constructed, is hewn in enormous masses, which excite astonishment in the beholder, it being difficult to conceive any mechanical means by which they could have been raised to and secured in their present positions. The greater part of the building has been subverted by some mighty power, and only one chamber is now left for the inspection of the curious. This is a cube in its proportions, being about seventy-five feet square, and the same in height; the stupendous blocks of which it is built are fastened together by solid bars of iron.

The roof is exceedingly curious, being constructed of enormous slabs of marble, rivetted in the same manner, but overlapping one another, so as to form a mutual support; and rising in the form of a pyramid, the apex of which is nearly forty feet above the height of the walls. Upon the summit of this roof is an enormous mass of masonry, forming a sort of attic story, beautifully ornamented with sculptured figures, graceful, even though grotesque; and supported by massive iron beams, which run horizontally across the interior of the roof, a portion of which (upon the western side) has fallen in, so there is little hope that the

remainder can much longer support its own weight, the uniformity of the pressure being destroyed.

The grouping of the solid blocks of marble and immense iron beams, which have fallen from above, is highly picturesque, but as I had unfortunately no drawing materials with me, I am unable to afford the reader a sketch, not having sufficient confidence in the accuracy of that which I afterwards made from memory. Two very solid iron beams have been much bent by the tremendous weight of masonry under which they lie half buried: the metal is evidently wrought, not cast.

This extraordinary temple is said to have been dedicated to the Sun. On every side of it the mouldings and ornaments are decorated with obscene and beastly devices, and the most revolting scenes and ceremonies are traditionally reported to have been practised here in ancient times: this is easy of belief, when we consider the extreme want of delicacy, both in customs and feeling, exhibited by the Hindus at the present day. I myself beheld, in Poori, a scene which I shall not readily forget; three young women of high caste were employed about the person of a denuded old Brahmin, in a manner utterly abhorrent to humanity. The *mahawut*, or driver of my elephant,

explained to me that these poor women, not finding themselves so prolific as they could wish, resorted to the performance of this rite as the means whereby they were to become fruitful, and the parent stock of a progeny as numerous as the seed of Abraham.

My short term of leave from my regimental duties had nearly expired, when I started upon my return to Dum Dum. So hospitably had I been entertained by my kind host and hostess at Poóri, and so highly had I been gratified by this my first excursion into the country, that when I again turned my thoughts towards the dull routine of cantonment existence, it was with a depressed spirit, and feelings approximating very closely to those which I remember to have experienced when a school-boy, returning to the discipline of academical life, without even a plum-cake in my portmanteau to keep down the lump in my throat.

CHAPTER VIII.

CANTONMENTS AGAIN.

UPON my return to Dum Dum, I received news of the death of my friend Howard ; he had been wounded in the thigh in a duel, though not dangerously, and was daily recovering the use of his limb, when a treacherous mortification took place, and carried him off suddenly. Peace be with his ashes ! My brother officer, who brought me the news of this poor fellow's melancholy end, had known him well in former days, and told me the following anecdote regarding him, which may perhaps be interesting to the reader, and will at least serve to display a state of things not unfrequently to be met with in India.

Soon after Howard's first arrival in the country, the regiment to which he was attached as a supernumerary ensign, was commanded by an old Turk of a martinet, whose violent and despotic

temperament had gained him the romantic *soubriquet* of ' Bloody Bob,' and the cordial detestation of every man in his corps. More than once, this man had been called upon, by different officers of his regiment, to render them private satisfaction for insults or injuries inflicted by him ; but the only notice which he deigned to take of these messages was to enclose their challenge in an official despatch to Head-quarters, and bring the writer to a court-martial for insubordination : of course, he was sent to Coventry by all his officers, and by others also who were acquainted with his real character ; but as he was seldom seen, except upon parade, it became a difficult matter to mortify him openly. Howard undertook to *pay him off;* and his ready wit did not leave him very long at a loss for an opportunity.

Soon after this resolution had been formed, the Colonel ordered the regiment to parade in full-dress for the inspection of arms and accoutrements, or for some such purpose, and Howard considered this a fit opportunity for the exercise of his revenge. The officers had collected in a posse in front of the line, awaiting the arrival of their favourite commander ; when Howard volunteered his services in chastising their common enemy.

" Now," said he, " when Bob comes on parade, watch me, and listen to what I shall say to him; only if I am hauled over the coals, and you are called upon as witnesses of what may now transpire, remember this, that you saw me particularly polite, but heard nothing. I mean to tell the savage in plain terms that he is the most infamous, low-bred, unprincipled, cowardly scoundrel in the country; so mind you that mum is the word."

The Colonel came, and Howard, who had cut him for more than a year, coolly went forward to meet him, and bowing very profoundly and respectfully, " Ah my dear Colonel!" said he, with the most perfect address; " glad to have an opportunity of speaking to you, 'pon honour; you are the most arrant poltroon, the dirtiest coward, the most contemptible scoundrel, I ever met with; hope Mrs. Bloody Bob and the little Bloody Bobs are quite salubrious. You mean, skulking, dastardly, pettifogging, brothel-born knave! You paltry, rascally, filthy, craven-hearted, misbegotten, lying——

" Mr. Howard! what the —— do you mean, sir, by insulting me thus, and upon parade, too, in presence of my own corps, which I have com-

manded for the last nine years? Where's the Adjutant? Here, gentlemen, bear witness to this fellow's insolence; you heard the insults which Mr. Howard has dared to offer to his commanding officer; I shall call upon you as evidences."

"We saw Mr. Howard address you, sir, in the politest manner possible," replied an accomplice; "at least, if we may judge by his manners, which we could not help noticing, because we were well aware that Mr. Howard and yourself were not on speaking terms. We remarked that, instead of appearing pleased by Mr. Howard's attention, your ire was kindled; but surely, sir, if you wished to avoid his attentions, you might have done so without losing your temper, or calling him a fellow, and accusing him of insolence."

"Why, sir, the scoundrel abused me like a pickpocket; he called me liar, coward, rascal; every term of disgrace that he could think of, did he apply to me, and in presence of my own corps; the villain dared to call me an ill-shaped knave, and everything else that is vile and contemptible. You *must* have heard him, gentlemen!"

"Surely, Colonel, you are possibly in error; you could not have heard Mr. Howard correctly: though the greater——"

"What, sir, do you dare to tell me that I have not the use of my ears? What is——"

"Though the greater part of Mr. Howard's speech to you was inaudible, still his action and manner could not be misunderstood, and it was very evident that his address was of the politest nature."

The poor Colonel saw that the stream was against him, and vowing vengeance through his teeth upon the whole party, he ordered the Adjutant to take Howard's sword, and confine him to his quarters, under close arrest. Howard took it perfectly coolly, threatening to bring the Colonel to a court-martial for calling him a "fellow" upon parade, and of accusing him maliciously of insolence before his brother officers. In the Colonel's presence he declared that he thought him demented, and that he would do his utmost to prove his insanity, and get him invalided. The Colonel in return vowed the most dire revenge against Howard, and under these terms they parted; but, strange to say, the commanding officer, finding himself without sup-

port, and being perhaps apprehensive of the threat about lunacy, thought it advisable to refrain from bringing the insolent ensign to public trial.

This anecdote of Howard was truly characteristic of him; his audacity was fully equalled by his address, and both of them were above mediocrity. Poor fellow, his end was a melancholy one, and was sensibly felt by those who had been intimate with him; for, notwithstanding his many failings and follies, he had a warm-hearted urbanity of manner, and an open generosity, which every where won him the good-will of his acquaintance: his many acquirements and his ready wit, moreover, rendered him a welcome guest at all times and in all societies.

Of all the evils or miseries which can befal us in a climate like that of India, I know of none which can so utterly destroy the energies of the mind or the strength of resolution, as the bane of sickness. Those even who have suffered bodily affliction, and have experienced the mental depression consequent upon it, in their native climate, can form no adequate conception of its effects in a tropical temperature, and in a land of strangers. Those alone who have been placed in such a situation, can possibly know how very

bitter a thing sickness is to the exile under such circumstances. What has a bachelor, thus placed, to afford amelioration to his woes? Stretched upon a solitary bed of sickness, he has no kind hand to cool his burning brow, or to administer relief to his devouring thirst; he has no sweet voice of affection to whisper the soothing words of consolation and hope. Alone, deserted by all, spirit-broken, and helpless, his humours and wishes scarcely heeded, perhaps altogether neglected by the black medicals in attendance upon him, he is overcome with the conviction, that should he pass from this existence, it will be without one tear of sympathy, without one feeling of regret, until his bones have had time to whiten in the grave, and the fatal news may have found its way to the circle of his relations: the anguish of such a situation must be felt before it can be fully understood.

The sufferer is debarred all mental resources, and having nothing to divert the current, his thoughts run incessantly upon the one idea of home, home, home: the heart clings to all it holds dear with a fervour till then unknown, and the extreme irritation produced by this unremitted train of wistful longings, becomes a malady in

itself, as likely to prove fatal as the original disease. It is a bitter thing for a man to feel that death stands by him, ready to blot him from existence, while those who love him are yet in utter ignorance of his fate, and cheerfully pursuing their customary avocations. A sister, perhaps, may be purchasing for him some little token of her unchanged affection; a mother providing some comfort for her son, or a father projecting schemes for his aggrandizement; each considering him as a being of the same elements as themselves, and as still their own, at the very moment that he has become subject to death, a being of an unknown essence, possessing an existence vague and incomprehensible to their ideas; all connexion and community of feeling being severed for ever in this life, and perhaps, —who shall foresay it?—perhaps throughout eternity.

At the time of my first arrival in India, the Artillery regiment was commanded by Sir Alexander M'Leod, a kind-hearted old gentleman, much esteemed in the corps, and one who, if he failed in any of the qualities necessary in the commandant of so large and important a branch of the army, was in error upon the right side; I

mean, that he was kind and indulgent to all under his control. He was hospitable in the extreme, and his house was an *omnium gatherum* for all grades, from the Colonel to the Cadet; nor was the old gentleman ever better pleased than when he saw his officers take their places at his table uninvited.

There was too little, however, of this liberal spirit in the small circle of our society at Dum Dum. The station being exclusively an Artillery cantonment, and the community, therefore, very confined, it was natural to hope that a common friendship and brotherly good feeling would have united the whole; but, unfortunately, it was far otherwise, and between seniors and juniors a most injudicious distinction was maintained by the former, any thing but creditable to themselves, and exceedingly injurious to all the young officers, and to the discipline of the corps.

I do not mean to affirm that this was without an exception; some few of the superior officers, with better taste than the majority, were much among the juniors, and took part in all their sports and pursuits; but, generally speaking, there was little or no intercourse beyond the cold courtesy of a morning call, or, once in a way, a formal invitation

to dinner. This is unwise and hateful, and subversive of all confidence and unity, which are the very bonds of order and efficiency in the army. A very pleasant change, however, was effected in the situation of the junior officers, not long after I joined the corps.

Our worthy commandant, Sir Alexander M'Leod, having lived to an advanced age, was gathered to his fathers, and was succeeded by a fine old veteran officer, who had commanded the Horse Artillery, the most dashing corps in the service, for many years. Of this branch of the regiment he was the founder and father, and in Egypt had commanded the experimental first troop, which he himself had also raised and organized. The old gentleman is a most soldier-like person in appearance, and a perfect horseman; his life has been actively occupied; a distinguished soldier, he was equally well known as a keen and undaunted sportsman in pursuit of the wild tenants of our *junguls*. I have never myself had the pleasure of accompanying him upon a sporting excursion, but he is known to have been, until the time of his departure from Merat, a sure shot, and a keen hand with the boar-spear.

Merat, in the Upper Provinces, had for several

years been the seat of his command, and here he had made himself a staunch friend, a very father to the officers of his brigade; and at the same time that he was ever ready to be a boon companion and hearty associate at the mess-table, or on sporting expeditions, still he was a strict commander, and never forgot the consideration which was due to his rank. Such a character at the head of our society, of course, wrought a rapid change in the state of things, and, while flattered by the kindness and hospitality of our commandant, we were rather indifferent to the reformed attentions of the other seniors.

It is customary in India for a commanding officer newly installed, to hold a levée of his officers, and to have those among them with whom he may be unacquainted, presented to him; this is more particularly necessary in a large corps, like the Artillery, in which there are more than two hundred officers, dispersed in different stations throughout the Presidency. I shall not readily forget the compliment which our newly promoted brigadier paid to the young officers at Dum Dum, on the occasion of his first levée. We had all assembled at the mess-house, and as the old gentleman passed down the line, each of us was sepa-

rately introduced to him; he stopped and addressed a word or two of greeting or remark to us, and when he had come to the end of the line, he turned, and looking from one to the other, he said, "Well now, I positively shall never know one of you from the other, you are all of you so like a pack of young monkeys." This flattering opinion, however, he not long afterwards forgot, and more than once declared that he had never before met with so many fine young fellows collected in one corps.

While I was at Dum Dum, a melancholy suicide took place in the regiment; a very fine young officer shot himself through the head with a ball from his fowling-piece: the commission of the act was deliberate, for he had removed the stocking from his right foot in order to be able to pull the trigger with his toe. Some persons assigned one thing as the cause for this suicide, some another; many were the suppositions advanced, but I believe it was never at all satisfactorily explained: however, as in most other cases where no exact motive can be pointed out, the multitude agreed in falling back upon the old explanation, that the man had always been afflicted with a constitutional sort of derangement of mind. This was evident to all who

knew him, and they themselves had, from their first acquaintance with the deceased, anticipated, nay, they believed they had repeatedly foretold what would take place.

Is it not strange, that when anything of this kind happens, we instantly find out five thousand circumstances to prove a man's insanity, which we were never before sensible of in that light? In the instance before us, the man was certainly fond of spouting Shakspeare to the winds, and to his sable attendants, while walking up and down his room or the verandah; his mind too was of a sombre cast, and loved to dwell upon the dark and more fearful pictures of his favourite author, rather than upon his sunny scenes of merriment and pleasantry; and, therefore, the man was mad; and it might have been seen that he would some day either shoot himself or cut his throat. I verily believe, that if I were to blow my brains out to-morrow, one-half of my acquaintances would discover that it might always have been expected. "Why," exclaims one, "the man was always prowling about the junguls by moonlight, and shutting himself up in his own room."—"True," says another, "he was rather strange; but then he was always merry enough at the mess-table,

and rational enough in his conversation!"—" Oh, yes!" replies the first, " that's all very well; but then there was always a sort of a—— something about him, a strange expression in the eye, which showed clearly that all was not as it should be. I have always looked upon him as a man who would either hang or drown himself, and you see it has proved so."

In February 1832, a popular disturbance took place among the Koles, a wild uncultivated race of men, inhabiting a tract of country lying to the south and south-west of the Rajhmahal hills, and forming the northern boundary of the province of Orissa. This district is desolate and unproductive; those parts of it which are free from ravines and shifting water-courses being overrun with impenetrable junguls and pestilential morasses, which render it uninhabitable over at least one-half of its extent.

There is little cultivation of the soil, and where it does exist, the operations of agriculture are performed in the most primitive and uncivilized fashion, the natives being too stupid to benefit by example, and too superstitious to venture upon any innovation of their established usages, or to desire improvement of any kind. They are well-

made and athletic in person, of very dark complexion, and coarse savage features; in temper they are sullen; dissipated in their habits, being slaves to the excitement produced by fermented liquors; and tyrannical and revengeful in disposition, without the restriction of any distinct religion, their nearest approach to a faith being superstition in its foulest forms. The most revolting part of their savage degeneracy exists in the almost indiscriminate connexions or marriages which take place between members of the same family, and the neglect of other decencies, which form the most distinctive line between humanity and the brute creation.

To quell the insurrection of these wild people, several detachments of Native Infantry were ordered out, and a couple of nine-pounders from our troop of Horse-Artillery, accompanied them, under the command of Lieut. W. Shakespeare;* a charge by no means enviable, owing to the difficulty of the ground for artillery, and the nature of the service, from which there was no chance either of

* In October 1835, this promising young officer was carried off by a fever, to which he fell a victim while travelling from Lucknow to Allahabad. He was much beloved by his brother officers for his natural kindness of heart and honourable principles; nor did his eccentricities of manner, or his oblivious reveries, at all detract from the estimation in which he was deservedly held by those who knew him.

honour or profit. The guns were seldom available, and Shakespeare found himself frequently compelled to untrace and use his men as irregular cavalry, much to their delight; for they thought it glorious sport to be galloping about, pistolling the black fellows, instead of mowing them down wholesale with grape.

On one occasion, Shakespeare, who was a fine high-spirited fellow, had been endeavouring to disperse, by a fire of shrapnel from a long distance, a strong party of the insurgents, who had established themselves under the cover of a thick copse. He found, however, that his long shots produced very little effect upon the enemy, and being unable to advance upon them, in consequence of some deep ravines and broken ground which lay before him, he would have resorted to his usual plan of converting his gunners into dragoons, had he not found the handful of Native Infantry who were with him a very inadequate guard for the protection of the guns, against so large a body of the rebels. Under these circumstances, relying upon the pusillanimity of the Koles, and the speed of his charger, he gave directions to the staff-serjeant to divert the attention of the enemy by a pretty smart fire for a few minutes; then taking a serjeant

with him, he managed, without being noticed, to work his way through the ravines, round the flank of the cover which the insurgents occupied. Followed by the serjeant, he dashed his horse over the enclosure, into the very thick of the mob, shouting as if he were leading on a whole regiment to the attack, and driving the whole party helter-skelter from their strong position into the open plain, where they were richly punished for their want of pluck by a hot discharge of grape from the guns, and a destructive fire from a detachment of infantry, which made its appearance upon the field at this critical moment. The only injury which Shakespeare sustained in this spirited *ruse*, was a bruise upon the knee, inflicted by a brickbat thrown at him by a naked black, upon whom he took revenge, cleaving his skull to the very spine.

The party, thus easily dislodged from their position, fell back upon a neighbouring stockade, where they made an obstinate resistance, and succeeded in annoying our men by a sharp fire of match-lock balls and arrows. Two of our Horse Artillerymen were killed, and several were wounded, besides some little mischief effected in the ranks of the Native Infantry.

Among the officers of this latter branch was a singular little Scotchman, who escaped the winding up of his worldly affairs, owing entirely to his exceeding diminutiveness and want of weight in the world. An arrow discharged from the stockade struck him, piercing his leather sword-belt, and would undoubtedly have entered his side, had not the force of the blow dismounted the little man from his pony, and thereby saved his life; for had he been heavier, so as to have opposed more resistance to the flight of the weapon, the consequences would probably have been mortal.

The stockade was carried without much delay, the greater part of the occupants having previously made their escape into the jungul. On entering the place, there were found a great number of dead men lying about the floors of the huts, carefully wrapt up in *chuddurs*, or sheets, as if they had been formally laid out by the retreating party; nothing else worthy of notice was discovered, and leaving a few men with orders to set fire to the place, our party were about to move forward, when Shakespeare fancied that he saw one of the dead men peeping through his eye-lids;

* Vide British, or Pocket Gunner.

he instantly suspected deceit, and knowing by experience how inimitably a native can counterfeit the breathless appearance of death, he in no very delicate manner strode round the place, treading upon the bodies of the supposed dead. This, however, only elicited such sighs and groans as might be supposed to be inwardly uttered by a carcase subjected to such unceremonious treatment.

Not quite satisfied with this test, Shakespeare called in the assistance of two of the gunners; "Here, Sullivan, O'Flaherty, take up these dead bodies and heave them over the breast-work into the ditch below." O'Flaherty laid hold of a fine strapping corpse by the shoulders: "Sure, and plaise your honour, he's as warrum as a butthered toust, sir; I'm thinkin' he's no rale carkis afther all, Mr. Shakespeare, sir; he's no way stiff then, but as limp as a farden rushlight in Augist, barrin' he's most as black as ould Nick." Carkis or no carkis, he was raised to the top of the wall, and launched over without the least ceremony, cracking the dried branches as he went rolling down the bank into the water below, evidently as dead as a stone. "Sure, then, the grasy divel was a rale body, and not shammin' at all, Pat Sullivan, darlin'; an' I'd be afther axin'

pardon of his black sowl, only I'm not jist perfet in spakin' *the Moors*.*

Just as Lary O'Flaherty concluded his expressions of contrition to the "black sowl," the "rale body" was seen to emerge head and shoulders from the thick green cream upon the surface of the stagnant dike; and casting a look of suspicion and timid intreaty at the wondering Paddies, it dived again below the filthy fluid, as if it had really been the spirit of the Kole, come back to earth to reproach the brother Irishmen with their ill usage of its earthly tabernacle.

"Arrah, by Jasus, then you murthering black baste, and is it me ye're afther starin' at with yer ugly teeth; by the powers if ye show yer——" out popt the head of the fugitant on the opposite side of the ditch, and having emerged from the water, he was just "takin' to his scrapers,' when Lary O'Flaherty and Patrick Sullivan each let drive a bullet at him, which brought the poor fellow head over heels once more to the bottom of the ditch, "this time a body in rale arnest, and no misthake," as Pat Sullivan said. The rest of the dead men were now successively restored to

* The Moors; a common expression among European soldiers in India, signifying the colloquial language of the natives; the Oordu or camp idiom of Hindostani.

animation by means of a little blood-letting, with one solitary exception, wherein even the phlebotomy wrought by the points of the men's sabres failed to resuscitate him.

Among the lower orders of natives, it is no uncommon thing to find men who can counterfeit so skilfully the semblance of death as to deceive even a medical man, until the hand is applied either to the heart or pulse: these men are frequently at very great pains to acquire this faculty, and practice it for many purposes. It serves sometimes as a means of concealment, but more frequently it is made available for the purpose of imposition.

The imitator of death is laid upon a *charpáhi*, or light native bed, and being painted as if covered with wounds and bruises, he is carried, in a state of complete nudity, to the house of an European magistrate or other civil functionary; here a pitiable story is related of his having been murdered in some remote village, and with bitter tears and lamentations, the magistrate is entreated to send officers to make official investigation of the case, and if possible to bring the perpetrators to an expiation of the outrage. In the mean time, the friends of the unfortunate murdered man having excited the compassionate interest of

the Englishman, or of some of the inmates of his house, solicit a gratuity for defraying the expenses of the funeral, for which they aver that they have no means; and if the trick be new to the beholders, an ample shower of donations will most likely be afforded to the poor bereaved creatures. The moment their object is secured, the sorrowing family withdraw, carrying with them the corpse of their deceased relative, who, as soon as he is out of sight of the house where the imposition has been practised, returns to the mortal world, and again condescends to make use of his limbs, taking care to appropriate an adequate share of the bounty which his ingenuity has purchased. Having then cleansed himself from his stains and artificial wounds, the whole party disperse, to avoid apprehension when the fraud is detected.

I was once staying at the house of a civilian, when one of his servants came in and reported that a murdered man had been brought to the door by a party of his friends, in the manner related above; he intimated at the same time that, from the appearance of the strangers, he was suspicious of their statement, and believed the dead man to be a counterfeit. We went

out and found a squalid-looking corpse, with two or three wounds upon the chest, and with many marks of violence about other parts of the person.

The bed upon which the body lay extended was placed upon the ground, and all around it squatted the relatives and friends who owned it, howling, screaming, and groaning, with a touching emphasis, which would have excited the sympathy of the most obdurate. My friend approached to examine the body, but was assailed with a thousand importunities not to pollute the corpse before the rites of sepulture had been performed.* He, therefore, refrained from touching the body with his hand; but remarking to the people that wood could not defile it, he stuck the sharp end of his billiard cue, which he had in his hand, into the side of the supposed corpse: this evidently disconcerted the surrounding throng; but as the body showed no signs of animation, or any fear of incurring a repetition of the test just inflicted, we began to think that the suspicion of the *Chupprassi* had been unfounded: the blow was repeated with increased force, and until the sharp point of the cue penetrated the flesh, between the

* The Hindus only burn the remains of their dead.

ribs. A very slight quiver of the muscles, and an almost imperceptible movement of the head, discovered the cheat; and my friend then told the people that they had better take the body to the hospital, for that life was not yet extinct. "Wa! wa!"* said they, "why the man has been dead since cock-crow; how, therefore, can he be alive now?" (an idiom quite as purely Hindostani, as it may be thought Irish).

"Bring a tea-kettle of boiling water," shouted the gentleman, to the dismay of the family.

"Sir, great sir, what would you do with boiling water? the man is dead."

"Exactly so, my good friends; and that is the reason that you are all weeping and sorrowful?"

"What else, sir?"

"Why I am a great physician, and know how to bring such dead men as these to life."

The poor fellows begged hard that the body might be spared; but the kettle was brought; and still the dead man moved not, until a small quantity was poured upon his foot; when he bounced from his *charpáhi,* and upsetting one-half of his little brothers and cousins, fled like a spirit rather than an earthly body.

* Wa! wa! a common exclamation of surprise, either in approval or dissent.

But enough of these live and dead black carkises; ould Pat Sullivan or Lary O'Flaherty would not have thought the remains of a whole regiment of *Sipáhis* worthy of so much consideration. The Koles were very quickly restored to submission, and our troops returned to their cantonments, without regret, from a campaign in which there was no prospect of gaining anything, except perchance a broken head, or a jungul fever.

Something has doubtless been heard in England of the vast capacities of our Indian *soakers;* men who can absorb or carry off "a power of potent fluid," just as a sponge may be filled, without excitement, without injury. Jack Falstaff himself might have envied the capabilities of such topers; his two gallons of sack to a halfpenny-worth of bread dwindle into nothing before the leviathan potations of our gigantic bacchanalians.

Opposite to my bungalow was an open space of ground, appropriated for the encampment of detachments, or of individuals marching through the station; and, during the hottest part of the season, I made a practice of inviting all officers who pitched their tents there, to take their matin meal under my roof, and to remain with me during the

heat of the day. This they were usually well pleased to do; and among others, I was one day favoured with the company of a noble captain, who, having refreshed himself with sundry glasses of *brandy-pani* (brandy and water), during the morning, went with me to the mess-house to *tiffin;* and after discussing a pretty hearty portion of solids, he called for a glass of beer. A bottle of beer was brought by the *Aubdar* (butler), and without hesitation consumed by my new friend; who, having swallowed it in two successive draughts, smacked his lips wistfully, and looked about as if in desire of more. I thought of his long march under a hot sun in the morning, and made allowances for his unconscionable thirst; so I called for a second bottle, and to my great astonishment he discussed it with as little difficulty as the first. I called for another—it vanished as rapidly as its predecessors; I then found it necessary to order another, and another, and another again, until nine empty quart beer bottles stood before him upon the table. He gave in, as I laughingly invited him to try the tenth.

"Why,——not any more, I thank you; had I not remarked that you were in the *Horse* Artillery, I should not perhaps have taxed your hospitality

quite so far: a subaltern on half-batta would, I suspect, be severely plucked, indeed, if unwittingly he should invite me to become his guest either at tiffin or dinner; indeed, I never accept their invitations, as I know I should subject them to an extravagance they could ill afford; I usually drink a dozen and a half of beer daily; sometimes less; but I have not unfrequently gone as far as the twenty-second bottle within twenty-four hours. My average, however, is perhaps not more than fourteen or sixteen bottles daily, and this, together with wine, &c. for friends and self, is just provided by my pay and allowances. This is a misfortune; but from habit, ever since I arrived in India, it has become constitutional, and I really do not feel that I am at all the worse for it; on the contrary, I am now so completely habituated to the thing, that any attempt to discontinue it is invariably the cause of sickness. If you ever come up to Berhampore, I will take care to repay your hospitality in good style, and I can introduce you to a man very little inferior to myself in his copious libations."

The captain dined with me in the evening, and I could not but remark that his quantum, for that day at least, came nearer to twenty-two than to

fourteen; still he was perfectly sober, and appeared to have imbibed the liquor without its taking the least effect upon his brain or nerves. He was a celebrated card-player, and being challenged to a rubber of whist, played his cards with so much coolness and dexterity, as plainly to evince that he was in no way excited by his deep potations.

This was the first specimen of a regular beer-drinker with whom I had come in contact; though I had before seen a much larger quantity of spirit, in a smaller compass, imbibed without intoxication. A gunner of the troop to which I was attached, used not unfrequently, for the sake of a small wager, or even for the price of the liquor, to drink a Dutch square, containing half-a-gallon of good proof rum, and go through his drills and exercises afterwards, without any apparent unsteadiness. Again, I have beheld an officer in the mess-room of his corps take down one of the candle-shades, and stopping the orifice at the bottom with his hand, pour into it two quart bottles of Brown's Cantenac claret, which he has drunk off without once removing the glass from his lips; and he afterwards discovered no symptoms of inebriety.

* Shakspeare's Twelfth Night.

These stories are wonderful, and wonderfully disgusting; but let them not be discredited. Both the officers of whom I speak, although now deceased, are well remembered by the majority of the Bengal army. Those who knew them not personally, were most probably well informed of their name and character; for among the members of a limited and exclusive society, like that of the Company's services, civil and military, each man's fame, be it good or evil, and also his mental or constitutional peculiarities, are known far and wide; so much so, that the characters which I have ventured to sketch would be instantly recognised by a brother Bengalli.

The effects of such hard drinking as this are visible in the above examples. Both were large bulky men, and such as might be supposed able to stow away a larger cargo than the majority of their neighbours; but they were hale, hearty-looking fellows, never sick or sorry, and bearing anything but the appearance of debauched men; no one could have supposed them to be such as Prince Hal would have adjudged the possessors of "hot livers and empty purses." Consequences, not immediate effects, were the penalty of this bibulous excess. Captain F—— had the constitution of

a horse; but he fell, under the inevitable though slow operation going on in the system, before he was five and thirty years of age. The other two instances are similar in result, though, from the greater potency of the liquor, the issue was more speedily wrought; both died young men, about the age of thirty, or perhaps less.

It must be understood that I do not by any means affix to the Anglo-Indian community the stigma of deep drinking, in the sense which would be attached to such an assertion in England. Under the melting temperature of a tropical climate, the exhaustion continually going forward in the system is much more excessive than in less torrid regions: to meet this rapid evaporation, it becomes necessary to "moisten the clay" with a more liberal supply of stimulating fluid than can be essential in colder climates; but the very cause which renders this increased quantity desirable, prevents the deleterious influence of the liquor from so readily displaying itself in the hateful form which it too often exhibits in our city of gin-palaces. In no society is intoxication more discountenanced or decried than among the Company's officers in India: what was once esteemed glorious, is now considered disreputable, and

those who adhere to so detestable a practice, are censured where they would formerly have been applauded.

Among our soldiers, the odious vice of drunkenness is undeniably prevalent, in defiance of Canteen Regulations, Courts-martial, or Temperance Societies; and prevalent it will continue among them, until reckless rakes and fallen gentry cease to enlist into our army; or till the self-reproaches and stinging regrets of the exile, together with the privations of a barrack life in India, shall be converted into their very antitheses. The soldiers will drink, and the soldiers will get drunk; the more you endeavour to dissuade them from it, the more they will not be dissuaded; and the more you exert yourself to prevent it, the more they will not be prevented. But though they will find leisure for drunkenness while off duty, there are a very small number who commit themselves before their officers, by appearing upon parade or other duty under the influence of intoxication. There may be twenty hard drinkers in a troop, one hundred men, but, generally speaking, not once in a week will an officer find a soldier unsteady in the ranks from the effects of drinking. Every man knows exactly what quantity of liquor he is

able to carry steadily, and without incapacitating him for the discharge of his military duties; and it is seldom that even the worst characters exceed their capacities in this respect. Again, the very presence of an officer, if he be respected by the men, is singularly efficacious in restoring sobriety to the soldier, at least in appearance.

I have frequently remarked a man reeling about and staggering as if he would certainly come to the ground, until suddenly overtaken or met by an officer; when he has instantly become steady in his pace, and will perform his salute without the least show of inebriety: but should he be spoken to, the evil immediately declares itself; he is accustomed to silence upon parade, and fortunately so for him; for, however unruly a member the tongue may be represented at other times, when the wine is in and the wit is out it becomes perfectly unmanageable; besides, I should conceive that this faculty of maintaining the outward semblance of sobriety extends no further than the mechanical command of limb necessary for the deception.

The test usually resorted to in all doubtful cases, is that of putting the soldier through his facings; which, if he can accomplish it steadily and with-

out stumbling, is considered a sufficient proof of his fitness for duty; or otherwise he is sent to the rear and punished for his offence, at the discretion of the commanding officer. This method of trial is entirely inadequate to the object; for although a man may be able to go through his drill and exercises without manifesting any decided indication of drunkenness, still it does not follow that he is capable of performing the many other functions which the exigencies of his profession may demand from him, wherein presence of mind and promptitude of action may be requisite: besides, under the guidance of a partially inebriated trooper, a horse will be found infinitely more harassed and fatigued, at the end of his day's work, than if he had been managed with the man's customary skill and steadiness of hand and seat; and in addition to the trial thus inflicted upon the horse's temper, both his mouth and paces are liable to undergo injury; even though the man's unsteadiness be imperceptible to the observation of an officer. He notices that the man is riding loosely, and without his usual care and skill, but he is unable to accuse him of being incapacitated by drink; he would be immediately met with the reply "I'm not drunk, sir. Put me through my facings."

I do not mean to assert that inebriety may not, in defiance of this test, be brought home to a man; doubtless it may: but the evil might be more readily checked if some more efficient trial were instituted. I would venture to propose that the man should be made to go through his extension-motions, where the nicety of balance requisite in the performance would immediately determine the propriety of permitting the man to undertake his duties, or the contrary. This, of course, with due submission to my superiors, and to those who are better able to devise, and more powerful to execute.

CHAPTER IX.

VOYAGE UP THE HOOGHLI.

In September 1832, the troop to which I was attached received orders to hold itself in readiness for a voyage to Cawnpore (more properly Kahnpore), from whence it was understood that we should march to Merat, the head-quarters of the Horse Artillery. This news was joyfully hailed by us, for the change was in every respect a desirable one: in quitting a vile Bengal climate, we should remove to the finest country, the finest air, the finest sport, and the finest society of which the whole peninsula of India can boast; moreover, we were going from a half-batta to a full-batta station, and from very many other evils to as many delectable advantages. It was, therefore, with much spirit and anticipation of pleasure that we set to work upon those preparations and arrange-

ments which are incident upon so long a voyage; for we might reasonably expect to be at least as long in reaching our destination as would possibly serve for a voyage all the way to dear old England.

Having procured boats, and laid in all necessary stores, &c., on the 13th of October we marched out of Dum Dum, towards Kassipore Ghât,* upon the Hooghli, as our relieving troop marched in. Poor wretches, I never before saw so pitiable an assemblage of ragamuffins; they would have shone pre-eminently in Jack Falstaff's corps, or among the Polish refugees: even the officers presented a spectacle of misery, destitution, and unwashen linen, as though they had been antediluvian Irishmen just dug out of a bog. The truth was, that they had been wrecked upon the river some eight or ten days previously, in a terrific gale, which swamped every boat, and left every man of them without change of raiment or coin.

The fleet had consisted of about thirty-five boats, officers' *budgerows* included, in which were stowed away nearly one hundred and thirty Europeans, reckoning in the women and children. They had embarked at Cawnpore, and having

* *Ghât*, in this sense, a flight of steps to the water's edge.

made a rapid passage down the Ganges, had entered the Bhágarutti with a fair, but stiffish breeze, which carried them into the Hooghli; here a sudden change taking place in the weather, they were detained by a strong south-wester, at a small village called Cutwah; and the gale continued to increase until it raged a perfect hurricane, which in a very few minutes tore from the moorings and demolished all the boats in the fleet, without a solitary exception; sacrificing to the unconscionable *Gunga Jee* (Ganges) the entire property and effects of each individual afloat; nor did the unreasonable Gunga hesitate to accept, in many instances, every single article of wearing apparel; even to certain last shirts and only pairs of inexpressibles, for which, when we beheld our unfortunate comrades, they had devised strange substitutes.

Men and women, according to their several exigencies, appeared to have made an indiscriminate appropriation of clothing, without regard to vulgar prejudices. Here might be seen marching in measured tread, among his equally quaint fellows, Phelim O'Reilly, a mighty fine Irishman, a six-foot soldier, clad in a pair of what had once been white inexplicables, of ample dimensions, but

questionable cut about the body, and terminating at the knees in two or three rows of frills, which had doubtless been intended to adorn less muscular members. In the rear, among very many other singular specimens of her sex, came Dorothy Crump, better known as Fat Doll, in an old regimental laced jacket, and a flannel night-cap; and then limped past, in unshod misery, the gentle Moggie M'Cann, habited in an old velveteen shooting-coat, with a green baize table-cloth wrapt round her waist, and falling to the knees, as an apology for an integument to the nether members.

These were among the most comely and decent samples of the poor wrecked troop; and fortunate it was, indeed, that there should have been no lady of the party, or she would certainly have been obliged to share a corner of the baize with Moggie M'Cann. This utter demolition of all personal property is accounted for by the circumstance, that the hurricane came on suddenly, in the night, and washed the fleet to pieces almost before the poor tenants had discovered the cause of their dispersion: fortunately, however, not more than two lives were lost, that is two white lives; some few blacks departed to another world, as a matter of course; but what are they among so many?—at

least, so say one-half of our white voices in India, after all such occurrences.

After their little floating town had been thus overthrown, the whole troop, women and all, were obliged to spend the night in the open air, among the wet crops; while torrents of rain poured down incessantly, rendered by no means less intolerable by the violence of the wind, which burst in heavy gusts upon the poor sufferers, as if it would have carried them off bodily. When day broke, they were still in the same pitiable plight; but they were fortunate enough to fall in with empty boats going up to Berhampore for the accommodation of H. M.'s 39th regiment; and the officer commanding the troop did not hesitate to seize, and appropriate them to the service of his men.

We gave these vagabond-looking brother soldiers a hearty cheer, as we marched past them, and proceeded to Kassipore Ghât, only four miles from Dum Dum: here we embarked, and although exceedingly ill at the time, I found myself necessitated to take the rear-guard duty; in which office it becomes indispensable to see all the boats a-head and to prevent stragglers. On this account, after the other boats of the fleet had got under weigh, I determined to remain at

the *ghát* until midnight, when I could take advantage of the flood tide and rejoin the troop.

About nine o'clock in the evening I was lying in a most blissful state of slumber upon my couch, in the sitting apartment of my budgerow, when I was suddenly aroused by a clamour of voices, wrangling in alternate and interwoven Irish, English, and Hindostani, among persons whom I guessed to be standing upon the steps of the *ghát*. I immediately walked out upon the deck of my boat to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, and saw, in the still twilight, the indistinct forms of European and native figures in passionate gesture and declamation.

"Och! the divel defind me now, ye nasty spalpeen, and bad luck to yer mother; but ye'd betther be saising yer blarney; and if ye're not prisently afther liftin' that *tokri* (basket) into the *dingi* (a small native boat), and, ye baste, if ye're not afther putting me and Judy afloat, it's meself that 'll be splitting yer dirty black pate in the twinkling of a bed-powst, I will."

I saw that poor Pat was desirous of explaining to the boatman that he wished to be conveyed with his Judy to the fleet; and it was evident that

he had made the *dandi* (boatman) understand him by his energetic manner—for, poor fellow, both he and his wife were unable to speak a word of Hindostani,—because the native was giving his reason why he could not accommodate the couple; so I called out to the disputants, "Hallo! Is not that corporal Donahoo's voice?"

"Och! yer honor," replied Donahoo, "and is it yerself that's spakin' to me? Arrah, Judy darlin,' all our throubles is over now, plaise the pigs; and plaise yer honor, sir, here's a dirty brute baste that won't be afther takin' me and Judy, Misthres Donahoo that is, savin' yer honor's prisence, up to No. 19; 'cause he says, the murtherin' liar, that there's a ghost in the *tokri*, and faith there arrunt no ghost here at all at all, yer honor."

"*Ho! dandi!*" I cried out, "*soonno haramzeadu; yei gora lōg nāo ki ooppur pahunchádo jut-put; een-ko pahuncháķurki hummen kubbur do, our thōra-se bukshis hum dāenge;*" which very euphonious sentence, being interpreted, signifieth, "Oh! you boatman, listen, you rascal; convey these white people forthwith to their boat, and having done so, come and tell me, and I will give you a reward."

"*Uchha, khoádwund,*" replied the black fellow, "*een-ko ulbutta hum pahunchadāenge, lehkin isse tokri men kooch soor ki* GHOSH *hi*——"

"Ghost! ye big bla'guard, ye tundherin' tief, there arrunt no ghost at all; bad luck to your own, if the divel has got one to fit ye. Arrah! by the piper that piped before Moses, then, if it's afther defacin' my carrackter ye are, it's meself that 'll brake yer black skull, and be sending ye off with yer nose in a sling."

"*Kooch soor ki* GHOSH *hi, gurreebpurwan, jo hum le-jana ne sukta,*" repeated the black man, without noticing Paddy's tirade; the substance of which was pretty much as follows: "Certainly, great sir, I will readily convey the people to the boat, but in this basket there is some *pigs'-flesh* (*soor ki ghosh*), which I cannot possibly take."

"Here, Donahoo; do you hear what the *dandi* says? he declares there is some pigs'-flesh in your basket; and that is the reason he cannot take it into his boat."

"Sure then, yer honor, the dirty spalpeen of a snowball is afther abusin' of yer honor's confidence intirely: furrust he said there was a ghost, and now he's tellin' of yer honor's honor another big lie, that there's pigs'-flesh, and there

arrunt a dhrop of pigs'-flesh at all, at all, savin' yer honor's prisence, Misther Bacon darlin'. It's jist a few innocent sossiges and pitaties."

The tide was ebbing strong, and No. 19 being three or four miles a-head, I knew it would be impossible for Donahoo and his Judy to reach it in a *dingi;* I therefore offered them a shake-down in the virandah of my cabin, and a comfortable corner for their innocent "sossiges and pitaties." In reply to this offer of mine, the corporal said, "Och! sure then, Sir, ye're a rale gintleman, yer honor, but I'm hardly fit prisence to be comin' aboard of yer honor's boat; for when I wanted to be afther givin' the nasty black brute of a *dandi* a basting, I jist kindly slipt off my overalls and handed them over to my Misthress Donahoo, to hould the while I walked into the wather for the boat, yer honor; so Judy jist steps into a slippery bit of mud, yer honor, and down she comes plump in the wather, and away goes my overalls down with the tide; but seeing yer honor's not over partic'lar, Judy and I'll be mighty well plaised to honor yer boat with our company for the night." So Judy, Misthress Donahoo that is, jist tucked her blue petticoat about her waist and waded to the boat, bringing on her head the

innocent sossiges and pitaties, and followed by her loving lord, who had no need of the same precaution as regarded his shirt. At midnight I unmoored my *budgerow* (more properly *budgera,*) and ran up to the fleet.

Precedent would, I know, bear me out in giving anything I might choose its foreign name, without entering into any explanation with the reader as to the use or appearance of the thing in question: I might call my budgerow by its name, and push on upon my voyage to Cawnpore, leaving my reader to imagine me performing the trip in a model of Noah's ark, or an Otaheitan canoe; but I follow not such precedent: my object is to be understood, and to be accompanied by my reader, without over-taxing his imagination. A budgerow, then, is an elegant, dangerous, uncomfortable-looking boat, something after the fashion of an inverted military cocked-hat. Two thirds of the deck is the space appropriated to the accommodation of the occupant; and it is divided into two apartments, the inner one being generally used as the sleeping room, and the outer one as sitting and dining room; in front of this is a virandah enclosed, for the double purpose of protecting the entrance from the direct rays of the

sun, and also as a convenient shelter to the servants in waiting. The remaining portion of the deck is occupied by the *dandis*, or boatmen, who, standing upright, ply a long paddle, made of bamboo, with a small piece of board attached to the extreme point; and this uncouth instrument is lashed by the centre to the boat-side, being worked straight up and down, as well as backward and forward, in the most barbarous style possible, without feathering or an even stress, to the incessant annoyance of an amateur oar.

The roofing of the rooms is used as a sort of upper deck, or rather as a poop; here too are frequently deposited *palkis*, boxes, bundles, sacks, &c., *ad infinitum;* and upon the hindermost extremity of it sits the *manji*, or helmsman, who is the responsible man, in fact, the master of the boat. The rudder itself is a gothic affair, more like an overgrown oar than what it is meant for, and would hardly be recognized as a rudder by a black man, if by accident one should be found resisting as much water as is allowed to pass through the interstices of its planks.

The apartments are of dimensions ample for the accommodation of one or a married couple, though at the hazard of being " taken in and done

for"; and they may be rendered sufficiently comfortable during the moderate seasons by proper precautions and appliances. The walls, or rather sides, are composed of *jhil-mils* or venetians, which may be opened all around: and this is pleasant enough in the cool of the evening; although in a high wind, suffocation with dust furnishes a hint that closed walls and glazed windows would add much to the comfort and good humour of the traveller.

The prow of this strange, unchristian-looking barge terminates in the figure-head, having no bowsprit; the only sails in common use are two or three lugs hoisted one above the other, in the fashion of our square-rigged vessels, though I have seen an attempt made to bend a stay-sail, and one or two eccentric instances of a jigger. These boats are generally clipping sailers, presenting the least possible resistance to the water; but they are continually upsetting, owing to their top-heavy stowage, and the broad resistance offered to the wind by the overgrown superstructure, when compared with the draft. Persons, however, who prefer sticking in the mud, or on a sand-bank, with superior accommodation and greater security, will find a pinnace a delightful habitation; they are

pretty boats, larger and better finished than the budgerows, and approximating nearer to the rig and build of our English craft.

In consort with, or rather in attendance upon either of these, is a sorry-looking, ill-conditioned thing, miscalled a boat, exhibiting a few rough planks, surmounted with grass hut, and paddled along by two or three beggerly unclad blacks. This affair is designated by the important and mellifluous title of the *bawarchi kanu ki náo*, or cooking-boat; and though not exactly an ornamental appendage, it is at least a very indispensable part of one's floating establishment.

In progressing, as Jonathan would say, up the river, if there be insufficient wind, or if the breeze be foul, the paddles are seldom of much use, and locomotion is effected by affixing a tow-rope half-mast-high, upon which the crew, consisting of twelve, fourteen, or sixteen men, apply their weight in a measured tread of about three miles an hour.

The *manji* remains on board to man the helm, and another man, designated the *golia,* stands in the bows, with a long bamboo, to shove off from all banks, rocks, and other obstructions, and to sound the depth. In fair weather, this sort of boating

is tolerable enough, and may be pursued without danger or discomfort; but in a gale of wind, I would fifty times rather find myself in a snug little square-rigged vessel, upon the wide Atlantic, than in one of these crank, whizmagig craft, brought-to upon the banks of the Ganges.

It is utterly impossible to induce the natives to build their boats after any improved system. Year after year, though they have beautiful European models before their eyes, the obstinate fools persist in turning out hundreds of these execrably-devised boats, to supply the places of those which annually perish; still, all the persuasion in the world would never win the idiots to fashion them without their odious cock-up sterns, planned, one would conceive, for no other purpose than to catch the wind, and be as inconvenient as possible in every other respect; and why? because their fathers, and their grandfathers, and their fathers before them, from time immemorial, have continued to build their boats so.

The boats used for the accommodation of the soldiers are much of the same structure as the cooking-boat, already mentioned; but they are much larger, and, generally speaking, have flatter bottoms, affording room for eight or ten

men, together with their bag and baggage, arms and accoutrements, &c. and in nine cases out of ten, a pretty good complement of dogs, goats, &c. who also share in the joint right of possession.

Our fleet was very large, for in addition to our own troop, one hundred strong, we had with us two companies of Foot Artillery, each one hundred, besides commissariat store-boats, &c.; making in all little short of sixty sail, of every conceivable size, cut, and rig, from the commanding officer's pinnace, to the commissariat *báboo's* covered *dingi*, through all the different grades of *bholeas, puttaillis, oolahks, pulwars, pahunchweis, cum multis aliis,* which an untravelled Englishman, if he beheld them, would never suppose to be intended for boats at all.

With a spanking breeze from the S.E., we sailed past Barrackpore on the morning of the 14th, nor is there anything at this place worth detaining the reader about, beyond the simple remark that it is a large military station, for the cantonment of the Native Infantry garrison of Fort William, from whence one corps, or a large detachment, is sent by monthly rotation for the orderly duties of the fort.

Near the lines is the foundation and commencement of an extensive palace, designed for the

country residence of the Governor-general, undertaken by the noble Marquis of Hastings, but discontinued at the command of the Court of Directors. The park, however, contains a handsome house used by the present Governor-general, where large parties are frequently given; indeed, this station having four regiments quartered in it, and being only sixteen miles from Calcutta, is generally a gay and lively place.

Here we fell in with a small fleet of budgeras, proceeding up the river to Dinapore; they proved to be occupied by an old general officer and his family, together with friends of theirs, sailing in consort, for the sake of companionship; these persons were known to our commanding officer, who, in common with his juniors, seeing that there was a handsome sprinkling of young ladies in the party, determined, if possible, to keep company with them, and strike up a visiting acquaintance. There were on their side several belles, with a paucity of beaux, and on ours a multiplicity of *married* and *unmarried bachelors*,* without one single petticoat in our whole fleet, barring my friend Judy and her circle of female society, to

* The former are thus designated when, as Benedicts, their wives may be in England, or otherwise *on leave*.

which of course we were ineligible. This comfortable arrangement of ours, however, did not appear to coincide precisely with the old general's pleasure; for whenever, by cracking on, we managed to push up to him, he fell astern; and again, when we slackened our rate, he went ahead post-haste, so that perseverance was necessary for our object. Chance frequently does more for us than our best exertions can, as will be seen by the reader, if he have patience to accompany me up the Ganges.

The gallant breeze, with which we started, very quickly died away, and left us the alternative of the snail's-pace locomotion by means of the *ghoon*, or tracking-rope. This method of travelling is slow, desperately slow, but it is convenient; for, while the boat is gliding gently through the water, the occupant may be employed in drawing, writing, music, or any other pursuit of the kind, without the annoyance of rolling and tossing, or shaking: he may further enjoy the comfort of having at hand all his personal effects, books, and innumerable conveniences, which no other method of inland carriage will supply, without the daily nuisance of being obliged to pack and unpack every thing in use. And then too, without trouble or

exertion, the traveller has the advantage of change of air and scenery, while employed in his usual avocations within his boat; or, if he prefer it, he may enjoy a good day's sport by following the course of the river, while his boat is still under weigh; for every where almost upon the Hooghli and Ganges, the banks will be found well stocked with game and wild fowl.

All these advantages and delights, however, can only be calculated upon as long as the season continues fine and moderate; for, during the prevalence of the hot-winds, a man would be burnt to a mere grill in one of these boats, and again in rainy weather, the confinement, damp sheets, damp clothes, and damp every thing, become intolerably irksome after a single week's probation; and when, after the expiration of the rains, the air stagnates, and impure exhalations commence on all sides, a man's constitution must have been calcined to the endurance of a mummy ere he can support such an aggregate of evils.

The scenery in many parts of the river is highly picturesque, and furnishes to the artist the most beautiful examples of form, of colouring, and of light and shade. The clustering domes and slender minarets, rising one above the other, from the

confused pile of buildings in a native city; the lofty gateways and massive breadths of granite walls, with their deep mouldings and quaint decorations; the broad *ghâts*, or flights of steps, out-topped with rising temples, in every form and character of eastern architecture, and skirted by the low dingy habitations of the poorer inhabitants, have a grotesque but wonderfully imposing air, and present a most effective combination of the grand and elegant with that which is mean and unsightly. Again, the banks afford exquisite little specimens of the picturesque, in a more simple and homely character. The ruined tomb, or peasant's mud hut, sheltered by an overhanging tamarind, or the matted banyan, is thrown into a quiet repose by the coolness of the shadows opposing the warm evening lights.

To all these local beauties, the graceful palm and lofty cocoa-nut, the thickly clustered *pepul*, the feathery *jhynt* and spreading *mango*, lend a peculiar grace, quite novel to the eye of a new comer. Then, again, may be seen the broad undulating plain, or wide expanse of lake, lit up with the vivid accidental lights and shadows of a tropical sky, at the breaking up of the monsoon; when the severed clouds appear in gigantic masses and

ragged heaps, driving across the deep blue sky. The craggy ill-clad steep in the sear and yellow tints of scorched herbage, with the deep channels of a wild ravine overhung by a tottering wall or broken dome, contrasts beautifully with the thick foliage of the distant wood; while, here and there, may be found the stately relics of ancient palaces and of by-gone splendour.

Except in the very flattest parts of Bengal, where foliage is often scant, every turn of the river will display a new and varied scene, usually adorned by a ruined temple, or a tomb, or *ghát* or groups of native huts, which will scarcely afford the artist an opportunity of exhibiting his skill in composition, being already as tastefully disposed as if they had been arranged by the design of a painter. It is remarkable, that the natives, who may rarely possess even the most limited conception of the art of pourtraying nature in drawing, should evince so striking a sense of the picturesque, in selecting the situations of their buildings, more especially of their tombs, temples, and religious edifices? Let a lover of painting remark the grouping of the objects where a *mhut* or *musjid* is found; he shall be glad in the raising knoll, the knot of bold contorted trees, the run-

ning stream or lake, and the broken ground adorned with weeds and moss: let him then take notice of the scenery *from* the position chosen by the builder, and he shall find that, both as an object in the picture and as a point of observation, there is no spot within very many furlongs of the place, which he would have selected in preference for a study.

Leaving Barrackpore upon the eastern bank, a few hours tracking brought us to Serhampore,* a long narrow town, lying along the western bank, and bearing very much the appearance of an English village. It belongs to the Danes, who carry on a lively trade in sugar, indigo, cotton, &c. A few miles above this place, and upon the same bank, stands Chandenuggur, a flourishing little station, colonised by the French. It has been in their possession since 1816, at which time it was ceded to them by our government. Its population is large and thickly stowed, and is supported by a brisk trade in a great variety of produce and manufactures. But a few miles above this place, again, is a third settlement in the hands of foreigners; the Dutch hold this place, and carry on extensive commercial transactions in sugar and

* This place is the head-quarters of the British Missionaries.

tobacco; the name of the place is Chinsura, and it was here that the British first established a factory in Bengal, about the commencement of the year 1656.

Proceeding up the river a few miles further, we come to Hooghli, a considerable town and civil station belonging to our government. This place also is upon the western bank; it occupies an elevated and commanding site, and is picturesque in its broken and irregular disposition; the buildings being in one place clustered together in thick groups, in other places wide and straggling, and divided by trees and patches of the bamboo, which add greatly to the beauty of the place. A handsome Christian church rises with bold and imposing effect, conspicuous above the temples of the Hindus and the *ghâts* upon the bank, to the style and architecture of which it forms a striking contrast. The town was once of much greater importance, having been the collecting station for customs and river imposts. It was colonized by the Dutch in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and was taken possession of by the English in 1640-41.

The natives in the outskirts of the town seeing me sketching, voluntarily informed me that at

no very great distance inland there were some fine extensive old ruins; whether this communication was suggested by their intuitive discrimination of the picturesque, or from having seen other visitors engaged in drawing there, it did not at the time occur to me to ascertain.

The moment a sketch-book is produced in a native town or village, before the sketcher has had time to cut a point to his pencil, he is surrounded by a host of lazy black fellows and naked children, come to take a *dehk* (look) at the *gora* (white man); then up comes a *Tahseeldar*, *Jemmadar*, *Durroga*, or other functionary of the town, yielding a profoundly abject obeisance, until he shall have discovered the rank and importance of the stranger; after which, all obsequious respect will be paid in exact proportion to the elevation of the visitor, and also in keeping with the consequence of the petty ruler himself. As thus: a *Tahseeldar* will make a very submissive *salaam*, but at the same time he will endeavour to shuffle off the reserve of infinite unworthiness, by seasoning his conversation with an occasional approach to the familiar. A *Jemmadar*, not being a man of so much official importance as the *Tahseeldar*, humbles himself with tokens of more profound



FAKEER'S SERAI, near HOOGHLY.

[illegible] great distance in [illegible] [illegible] old airs; [illegible] suggested by the [illegible] of the picturesque [illegible]

The [illegible] native [illegible] time [illegible] by a [illegible] of [illegible] have [illegible] stranger; [illegible] will be [illegible] quer[illegible] *Tah* [illegible] but at the same time [illegible] will [illegible] off the reserve of infinite unwor[illegible] [illegible] his conversation with [illegible] proach [illegible] the [illegible]. A [illegible] man of so much [illegible] *dar*, humbles himself [illegible]



SERAI near HOOGHLY.

respect; he *salaams* with both hands, bending to the ground, puts off his shoes when he ventures to approach close, calls himself the slave of the stranger, and endeavours to flatter him into the belief that he is of more consequence to the well-being of the world than the light of day or the air we breathe. Again, if one less consequential than he should approach, it would be with still more abject expressions of inferiority and submission, and the traveller would be assured that he was of infinitely greater importance to the creation than the sun, moon, and stars altogether; that he is larger in person than an elephant, and more powerful than a god. The rank of the party addressed, of course, is borne in mind: if he be a judge, commissioner, or magistrate, there will be no bounds to the respect and flattery offered by the black man; if a general or colonel, the humility will be very great; but if an ensign, he will come in for a very limited share of attention and humbug; the rate and proportion of the pay-bills being a very accurate scale of admeasurement.

If sketching be really an object, the only plan is to make the friendship of one of these men having authority, and purchase peace at the price of a small gratuity; for amid the riot, confusion,

dust, and evil smells arising from the mob, it will not be possible to make a drawing.

Daily at peep of dawn our trumpets sounded the advance, and the boats were speedily got under weigh; the commanding-officer leading, and all others taking precedence according to rank. I usually walked before breakfast, with my gun over my shoulder, taking a few servants or beaters with me, and in this manner I always managed in the course of an hour to pick up sufficient game for the supply of my larder. As the sun approached the horizon, in the evening, the commanding-officer brought-to his boat, in order to allow the worst sailers to reach the halting-place before dark; but this precaution did not always avail, for, when on rear-guard duty, I have frequently been poking on till midnight. We had no mess in the fleet, but usually sent our dinners to the same table in one or other of the most commodious boats, as the humour might prompt.

About one hundred miles above Calcutta, upon the west bank, is a small village called Kutwa, known as the scene of a hard-fought action between the British and Meer Kassim Ali, in 1763. It was here that our relieving troop was wrecked in its passage down from Cawnpore. Vestiges of

its destruction were still visible on all sides; the shores and sandbanks were strewed with unserviceable boats, planks, broken chests, and useless remnants of furniture. Here and there were erected along the banks small mat huts, the temporary domiciles of *tchokedars*, or watchmen, guarding these valuable relics of property from further spoliation; and both upon the water, and in the water, were men still carrying on a search for missing property. My servants picked up various useful articles; among other things was a packing-case full of blacking, which would have lasted me and all my acquaintance till boots and shoes go out of fashion.

These extensive wrecks are constantly occurring upon the Ganges, in consequence of the native boats being so liable to capsize; and a person navigating the river immediately afterwards, will frequently find property many miles from the scene of its loss. The doctor of the troop to which I have alluded lost every single article of his property, being left without a thing in the world except his commission and one tattered suit of raiment; two days afterwards, however, he had the good fortune to pick up a couple of large casks of fine old sherry, which he did not hesitate to appro-

priate and send to auction, for sale upon his own account; the proceeds furnished him with a very respectable kit, and a new case of instruments. I myself, on one occasion, being upon the Ganges in a small open boat, picked up 700 cocoa-nuts, the value of which was equivalent to something near five pounds.



TOMB OF A SUTTI, BERHAMPORE.

CHAPTER X.

BERHAMPORE.

THE military cantonment of Berhampore is the next place which claims notice. It is of small importance, having only one corps of European Infantry, and as many *sipáhis,* quartered in it. The barracks form a square, and have good accommodation both for the officers and men. Altogether, the station is neat and cleanly in appearance, and in the neighbourhood beyond the *jheels* (low land, flooded during the rains) the country is picturesque.

Our fleet had scarcely brought-to at the *ghát,* when I heard a native inquiring for me by name, and finding him to be a gentleman's servant, I admitted him to deliver himself of his errand. The man said that he had been sent by his master with his *bahoot bahoot salaam* (very best compliments), to invite my mightiness to breakfast with him; his master was very sorry he could not write a note, but being engaged in a billiard-match, he was un-

able to do so. This conversation, be it remembered, was in Hindostani.

"I'm much obliged by your master's politeness; but what is his name?"

"My master's name, great sir, is Purser; will you be pleased to honour his table with your presence?"

"I will breakfast with Mr. Purser, or Captain Purser, with pleasure; but I really do not know the gentleman, nor have I ever heard of him."

"Protector of the poor," replied the slave, "my master's name is not Purser, but Pósto—Captáun Pósto Sahib."

"Posto—well, Posto then; I don't know any Captain Posto,"

"Not Posto, sir, you mistake your slave; the name is Puster—Captáun Puster Sahib."

"Well, Puster, Posto, or Purser, it's immaterial to me; I tell you I do not know the gentleman, but—"

"Excuse your slave, great sir, he fears you are ridiculing him: surely he speaks the name plainly; Captáun Pursto is my master's name; but if your mightiness is still at a loss, I will endeavour to recall him to your memory. Only a few months since, my lord was travelling to Dum Dum, and

your magnificence was pleased to invite him to your mess. Your slave had the honour of attending upon that occasion, and perfectly remembers your honour's handsome face."—Had the man been addressing his Satanic majesty himself in his ugliest mask, the compliment would have been uttered in precisely the same words. I was still in the dark as to the identity of my polite friend, until at last the fellow, with a perfectly grave face, gave me a direct clue.

"Your honour may, perhaps, remember that my master drinks a great deal of *beer-shraub*."

"Oh! oh!" cried I, at once, "F——, Captain F——?"

"*Han—n Khodáwund,*" replied the man, *Captáun Porsto Sahib. Dooroost hi.*"

I found my good friend of beer-drinking memory in the billiard-room, with half-a-dozen other rakish looking fellows, who had been playing all night; and from the squaring of accounts, it was evident the stakes had been high. It was an easy thing to discriminate between the successful ones and those who had been losers.

"Well F——," said a greenhorn-looking young fellow, with a loser's woful grin upon his lips "that's a cool seventy-five gold mohurs to-

night; and the thirty-two last night, makes a hundred-and-seven; how does that stand in rupees —something above 1700,* is it not? Now come, give me 20 out of 101 and I'll go you double or quits, or double our old stakes."

"My dear fellow," replied F——, "you had better drop it now; you are off your strike, and must lose to a dead certainty. You shall have your revenge some other time."

"Pooh! stuff!" replied the boy, "you don't like to give the odds, and so you put me off with a lame excuse. Come, you've won a long score on the 15; the least you can do is to give me longer odds, say 18 and let me run my chance."

F—— still declined, offering however to give the odds demanded the next day, for any sum; but the young fellow still persisted in his wish for an immediate trial, and F—— at last gave in. "Very well," said he, "I see you are determined to double your debt; do so by all means. I tell you again you are very foolish; you are off your strike altogether, and can't play within six points of your usual game, while I am perfectly steady and in high luck; come, give it up."

It would not do; the young man was deter-

* About one hundred and seventy pounds.

mined to have his revenge, and we stopped to see the match. F—— was an old stager, and took the matter as coolly as if he had been playing for a broken biscuit: but it was not so with the other; he was nervous and excited, and the first few strokes showed how the game would probably go. F—— remarked this, and again offered to postpone the match; but the Ensign would not hear of it; he grew warm, abused his bad luck when his play was at fault, and became altogether too unsteady to leave himself a chance of success.

"Marker, how's the game?" said F——, preparing to take advantage of some pretty balls. "Twenty to twenty-five, sir," cried the marker; but before F—— had finished his run, the game stood forty-eight to twenty-five, and throwing down his cue, he said "come we'll give it up." But the demon of gambling had taken possession of his young adversary, and he insisted upon the match being played through. "Well, then," said my friend to him, seeing by his wild air, and the deepening flush upon his cheek, that the lad was probably playing beyond his means of payment, "at least I will not take your money without giving you another chance; Marker, score this gentleman up to sixty." The fool at first objected,

but, upon second thoughts, accepted this new life, and the game continued to run with pretty even success till past the third 20; F——, however, gradually gaining ground upon his adversary. In the fourth 20, they were even—67 all; in the fifth 20, F—— ran rapidly a-head—94 to 72, and the poor Ensign became so utterly discomfited, that he lost all self-command, and the match closed —Game—74. This was deep gambling for an Ensign, upon pay and allowances not exceeding £20 a month. But F—— was a noble fellow; he gambled for the excitement of play, and not for what he could make by it, and in the magnanimity of his heart he remitted to the Ensign every stiver of his debt, accepting from him only a horse as a present.

In the evening, I beheld another instance of this man's extreme generosity, which I cannot forbear mentioning. At mess, we met two young civilians, who were passing the station, in their route up the country; conversation turned upon gambling, and it was easy to perceive that these two young fellows, being beginners, dabblers only in play, were in their vanity somewhat over-rating their skill. My blunt friend F—— could not help telling them, that if they did not take heed,

their over-weening confidence would lead them to burn their fingers. This was replied to by a warm retort, and a challenge to a certain number of rubs at whist and billiards. It is not necessary to follow the game; suffice it to say, that the peep of day found the two younkers as penniless as denuded barbers. After trying their hands at every game they could think of, whist, billiards, hazard, double-dummy, écarté, cribbage, and back-gammon, they discovered that they had not in the world the value of a pewter sixpence left to pledge. In truth, they were a pair of harmless doves in the power of wise serpents, and they were plucked of every feather. Drafts and promissory notes were given at once, and the next morning F—— received two or three horses, saddlery, plate, furniture, and other valuables to a large amount, besides fancy waistcoats and hats, the men having at last staked their very clothing.

"Now, this shall be a lesson to them," said my friend.

"Yes," I replied; "very likely to deter them from gambling again for the present, seeing they can have little left to stake. Yet, from the specimen we have had, I should think it very probable that their first month's pay will go to

tempt dame Fortune, in the hope of retrieving their ruinous losses."

"Not if I can prevent it," said F——; "I will let them go two days up the river in their present pitiable plight; and when they have sufficiently experienced the discomfort of their situation, I will tip them a line to come back again for their goods and chattels; but I will return them, only on condition that they pledge themselves not to game again for the next three years."

This my friend really did, restoring every thing except the cash, after having exacted the promise as above. I know not if their parole was really kept, but I should think there can be little doubt of it, from the circumstance that, three years after the above occurrence, both the young fellows were living in comfort and in good repute, which certainly would not have been the case if they had prosecuted their career in India as they commenced it.

There is an episode in the history of my friend F——, so highly ludicrous, but at the same time so critically improbable, that I am almost inclined to pass it over, lest it should be deemed fiction. The fact I am about to relate is too well known in India to be questioned, even if the tale should

have stretched a little in circulation. F—— had three times been saved from drowning by the aid of the swine tribe. The ship in which he sailed from England touched at the Cape of Good Hope, and was wrecked in Table Bay, during a terrific hurricane; the vessel, in common with most of the others in the bay, was blown ashore, and F——, who could not swim, was washed overboard by a tremendous sea, which swept clean over her. When he rose from the belly of the element to the surface, the first thing he espied was an old sow swimming close to him; if a drowning man will really catch at a straw, conceive how eagerly F—— seized the old sow by the tail; she kindly took him in tow, and landed him upon the beach, having cut her own throat in her magnanimous exertions.

About twelve months after this circumstance, he was going up the Ganges in a Dacca *pulwar*, when his boat was upset in a squall, and his life was again saved by the opportune assistance of a second old sow; and report says, that, having more confidence this time in his own skill, he ventured to get astride of her back—submitted to the reader's refined judgment. This was the second time of asking the old sow, and the third occurred several

years afterwards, when F—— visited Bombay. By some accident, the particulars of which the deponent specifieth not, he was within an ace of a third wreck; and seeing that there would have been no pigs at hand to rescue him, he determined to learn the art of swimming forthwith, for which purpose he took a daily dip in the sea.

Before, however, he had made much progress in the art, he was unfortunately carried out of his depth by a retiring surf; and in all probability he would have taken up his passport for another world, had not a small *dingi* been close to him, occupied, as he found to his utter astonishment, by a large stock of pigs, which the boatmen were conveying to one of the ships. F—— laid hold of the gunwale of the boat, and the two men, seeing that he could not swim, bent over immediately to his assistance, carrying their entire weight to leeward, so that the skiff was capsized, and all were indiscriminately immersed. The moment F—— saw the pigs in the water with him, he felt a most comfortable assurance of his safety, and confidently selected the most buoyant-looking old sow in the herd; not forgetting to take into consideration the comparative length of their tails. His judgment it appears was not at

fault, for of the whole company of swine who were upset, two or three only were saved, and first and foremost among these came the old sow, bearing F—— in tow. After these successive obligations to the unclean animal, it is said that he conceived a vast veneration for the species, and would never allow their flesh to be placed before him.

A few miles above Berhampore, stands the ancient but mean-looking city of Moorshedabad, occupying both banks of the river. It is a low dirty place, and possesses no buildings worthy of notice, with the exception of the *Eina Mahal*, the palace of the present Nawab: this, though scarcely finished, is a very handsome building, reflecting great credit upon the talents of its architect, Colonel M'Leod, of the Engineers; and it has an imposing position in approaching the city, either up or down the stream. The former palace, called the *Lall Bhág*, is a shabby old brick building, such as we can hardly fancy to have been the residence of Moslem princes. The seat of government was removed hither by Jaffier Khan, otherwise known as Moorshed Ali, and it continued the capital of Bengal until it was taken by the British, in 1757. The character of the present nawab does not stand very high in the estimation either

of Europeans or natives: he is a wanton debauchee, without one single good quality, save generosity, to balance all his evil propensities. This city is famous for its silk manufactures, and carved ivory toys, chess-men, &c.

Jungeypore, or more properly Jungulpore, is the next place worthy of notice. There are very few civilized-looking houses in the town, but there is something peculiarly picturesque in its broken and unconnected appearance, the whole place being intersected in every direction with belts of thick bamboo. The *ghâts* and temples are small, but picturesque and handsomely decorated; more particularly the shrines of Mahadeo, or Siva. It is a thriving and prosperous place, being the principal silk factory in the possession of the Company. I did not see the process of spinning or weaving, but the worms struck me as being much smaller than those which I have seen in England; the mulberry tree is very small in comparison with ours, but the leaves are said to be more nutritious.

I have heard in India, and from my grandmother, stories of towns inhabited entirely by children; certainly this must be one such. Never before did I behold such a host of little urchins; in proportion to the adults, they appeared to be

at least ten to one, but I did not learn that there was anything peculiar in the climate to induce such profusion on the part of the matrons. The little naked brats were as countless as tadpoles in a horse-pond; so doubtless they were given by Vishnu, the preserving deity, and permitted to live, by Siva the destroyer, in Hindu mythology; to whom a very great number of temples are here erected, and whose favour, therefore, has possibly been gained; Vishnu making fruitful, and Siva withholding his blighting arm. The dogs, too, I should fancy, must have had their own little temples, for they were almost as innumerable as the children.

A word or two about these dogs. If aristocracy and influence do not claim for them attention and respect, their vast numbers, at least, and their useful qualities, entitle them to the privilege of honourable mention, a compliment we do not grant to every puppy. The whole face of Hindostan is overrun with a tribe of ill-favoured dogs, commonly called *Parrias*, undoubtedly the lowest caste of their species. They are the gipsies of the canine race—a wandering, thieving, quarrelling, dirty, ablutionless class, who exist upon "the common property of the world," without a home

and without servitude. They are deformed in person, and devoid of all the nobler and more estimable qualities of their civilized brethren; moreover, they are totally wanting in pluck, and abound in cunning. Like most other unfortunate, ill-starred beings, they are, however, much belied, and often accused of sins which others commit in their name.

On one occasion, I lost from my tent two pine-cheeses, a bottle of brandy, and a quantity of *hookka* tobacco, and when I came to make investigation for them, I was assured, in the most solemn manner, by my *khidmutgar*, that a large *Parria* dog had come in the night and carried them off. Of course, I could not discredit the assertions of an honest man, and could only conclude that there was some birth-day to be commemorated in the *Parria's* family, or other jubilee to be celebrated, which required to be graced with more than ordinary luxuries; doubtless, there was real merriment among them, for the brandy was Cognac 1795.

The whole fraternity of *Parrias* have a peculiar antipathy to anything in the shape of a white face; no sooner does an European set his foot in a native town or village, than he is surrounded

by a whole swarm of these brutes, who forthwith commence a terrible howling and barking, which must be audible to the man in the moon. If, however, the intruder be happy enough to possess a scolding wife at home, or if he be otherwise inured to the torment of vociferation, he need fear no evil; for, like the natives of the soil, though they are highly "gifted with the gab," they are devoid of all combative propensities, and will be found to shun a personal conflict, whenever they have reason to suspect they may be worsted. To the traveller, they are certainly an intolerable pest; but, to fall back upon the old adage, "there is no evil," &c.—they have their useful offices to perform, which would escape the notice of a superficial observer: nay, they are a wise provision for our comfort, and an indispensable part of the community.

In common with the myriads of adjutants, vultures, kites, jackals, and other consumers of filth, they hold the important office of scavengers-general to the whole country; and certainly they do their work with a nicety which would excite the envy of a metropolitan sweeper. Nothing in the world comes amiss to the appetites of these omnivorous animals—offal, cabbage-leaves, mud,

wood, grass, carrion, and pollution of all sorts, are devoured with a relish by them. Should you behold the carcase of a Hindu gliding down the river, just glance at the bank; you will see a procession of *Parrias* following the corpse, with most funereal step, until some jutting point arrests its further progress; when these canine undertakers hasten, with the utmost alacrity, to pay the last obsequies to the defunct.

CHAPTER XI.

BANKS AND CITIES OF THE GANGES.

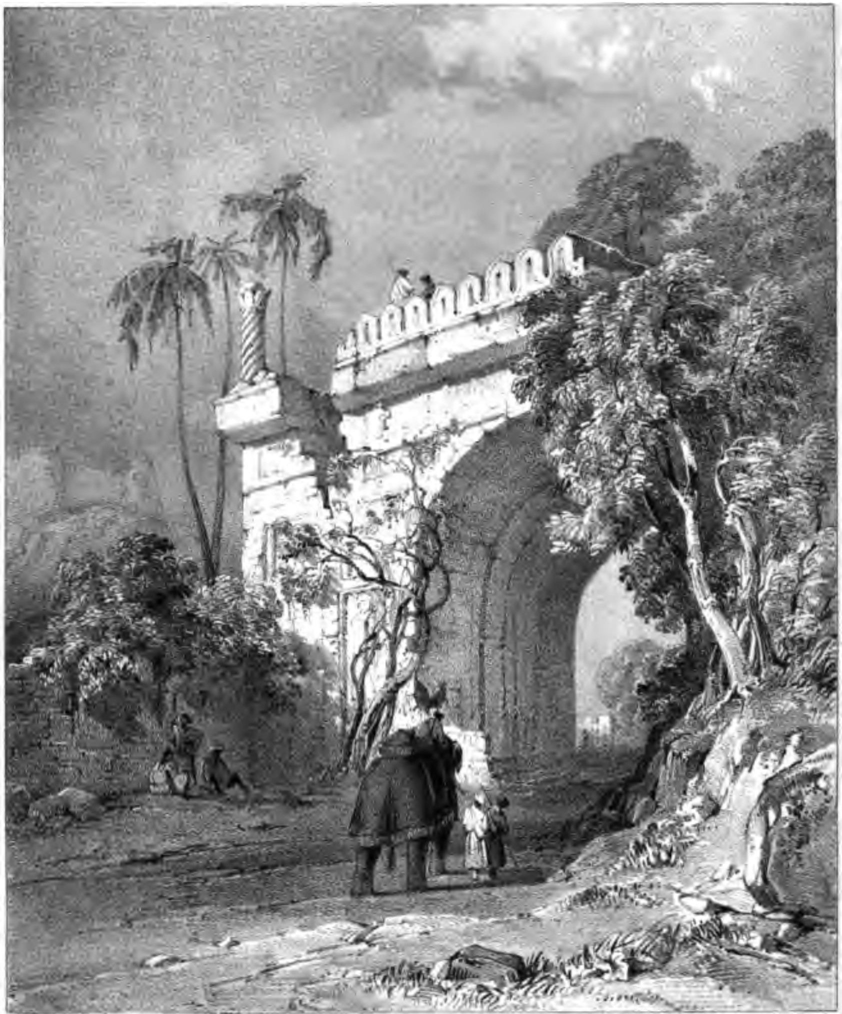
On quitting Jungulpore, we were carried speedily into the mighty Ganges by a fine breeze from the southward; and leaving the narrow channel of the Bhágaratti,* a vast expanse of water opened to our view, spreading about two miles and a-half in width, and intersected in all directions with sand-banks; these obstructions, however, do not extend more than a mile or so to the westward, and here the course of the river is confined within more narrow limits; whereby it is rendered pleasing to the eye and less difficult of navigation. Minute descriptions of the course of the Ganges must not be implicitly relied upon, as the banks of the river are continually shifting; so that a village overlooking the water this season, may by chance be far distant from it next season, or it may happen to be in

* Bhágaratti, the name given to the western branch of the Hooghli, that to the eastward being called the Jellinghi.

the very middle of the stream, or otherwise to have been swept away altogether. The cities and larger towns only can afford to raise barriers sufficient to repel the incursions of the stream; thus any local remarks, as to the appearance of the river, can only be depended on for their correctness at the time of observation.

About fifteen miles above the division of the Bhágaratti from the Ganges, is Rajhmahal, from its antiquity and picturesque beauty, one of the most interesting spots upon the river.

In the reign of Akbur, towards the end of the sixteenth century, this place was the capital of the Mohummedan power in Bengal; and there now remain very extensive ruins of the grandeur of those days. There is little to be admired in the architecture of the buildings as they now stand; but their scenic interest exists in the vestiges of decayed magnificence, overrun with weeds, and interspersed with groups of waving bamboos and knots of forest-wood. From the centre of the river, at a distance of something less than a quarter of a mile, the view is exquisitely picturesque; the bold angles and broken arches of the masonry stand out from the dark green foliage with a prominence which adds greatly to



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their grandeur ; and a less obtrusive, but equally effective beauty, is found in the grouping of the fallen towers and solid fragments of masonry, which lie prostrate upon the shore below. These beautiful ruins are now falling rapidly to decay, being frequently broken down by the natives for the sake of the material, which is principally red granite. One of the handsomest chambers, however, the *Sungi-dullán*, or marble hall, stands some chance of preservation and repair, as it has been converted into a coal-hole for the supply of the Government steamers plying up and down the Ganges.

It is difficult to conceive why this place has not been taken advantage of as a military cantonment, when we consider its value as a central depôt, and the natural strong barriers which it commands on either side of the hill passes, both towards Bahar and the province of Orissa.

The natives of these hills are a race perfectly distinct in appearance, manners, and habits, from those of the plains, and they speak a different language, approaching in its general features more to that spoken by the Koles, than to Bengalli or Hindostani. They are very primitive in their customs, and possess also a simplicity of character

very remote from the inhabitants of the low countries, being averse to cunning, theft, and lying, the three chief accomplishments of the common classes of black-men. These *pahárries*, or highlanders, bring from their wild haunts, wood, charcoal, and honey, which they barter for grain and the common necessaries of life.

At this place, I discovered that the natives of India pay great respect to a bald head, more particularly when found in the person of a young man; they consider it significant of extraordinary wisdom. Having had my upper story unthatched by a severe fever, I received much polite attention from respectable natives, and in several instances was consulted for advice, both in cases of sickness and distress of mind. I assured the poor fellows that I was no doctor, and could afford them no relief; but they, referring to my bald pate, insisted upon it that I was a "*burra ukkulmund admi,*" and must therefore be able to cure them: on more than one occasion, therefore, I ventured to administer a few bread pills, or some Spanish-liquorice, which, by virtue of faith, in most cases effected a cure.

The old general, whose fleet we had fallen in with at Barrackpore, had made desperate efforts




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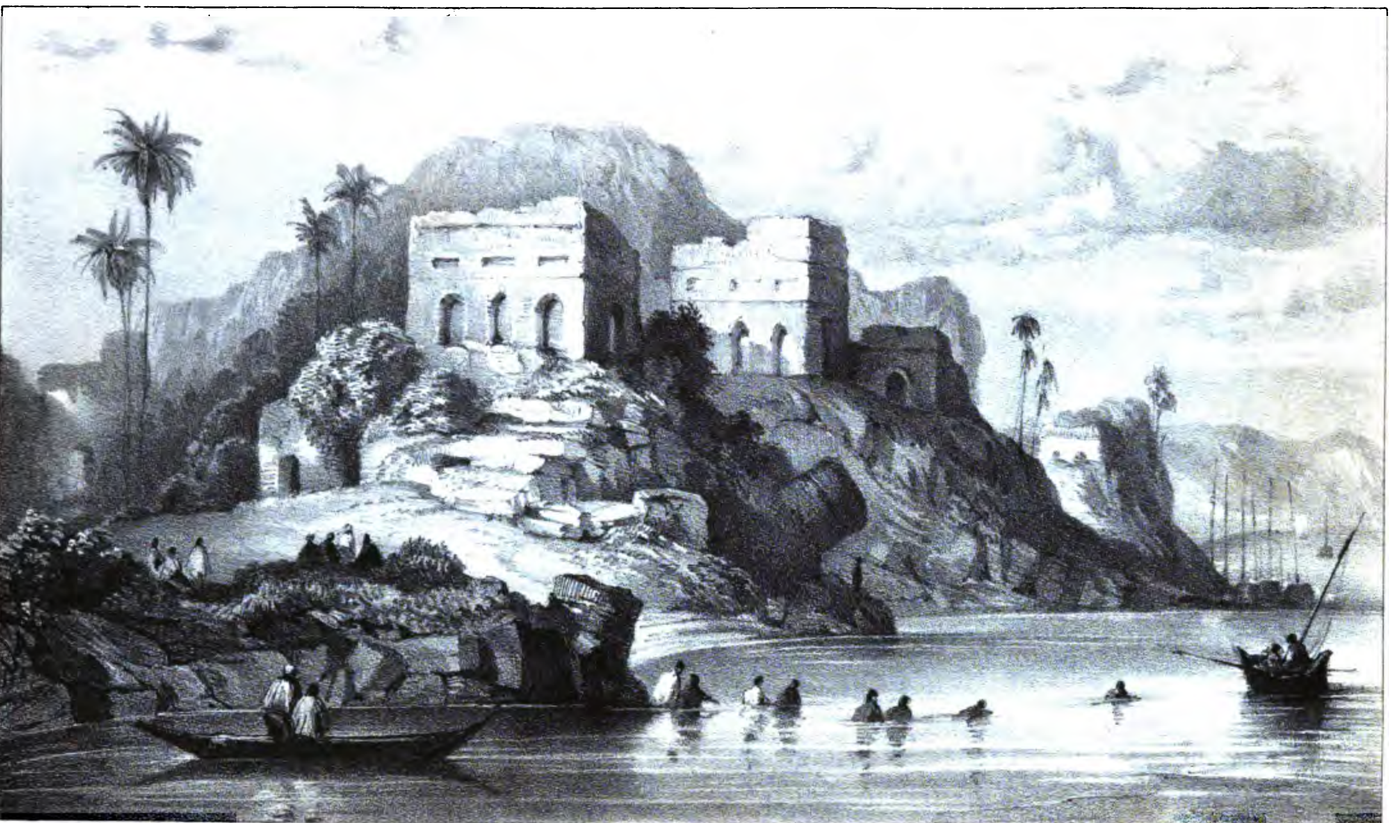
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THE SUNGI-DULLÁN, RAJMAHA



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THE SUNGI - DULLÁN, RAJEMAHAL.

to shake us off; but this he found no easy matter: the more he wanted us to go, the more we wouldn't go; but we called upon him and his party, with the hope of inducing the ladies to encourage a more sociable intercourse. Now, although the fair travellers were exceedingly affable and polite, and furthermore well pleased with what scraps of gossip we could furnish, yet we received a hint that too close a proximity to so large a fleet of European soldiers was not at all an enviable position; and we were requested to explain how it was, that, in defiance of their best endeavours to avoid us, our fleet had continued to keep so close upon them: to this enquiry, we, of course, returned the most flattering explanation, and were gratified in return with smiles of approbation; but still no overture was made for a continuance of our civilities, nor were we suffered to depart without another hint, that the ladies coveted not our society at the expense of all the noise and confusion ever attendant upon the movement of troops.

After this direct intimation that our company was not thought desirable, we suffered the general and his party to go a-head, and we proceeded on our voyage without thinking more of them. The next evening, just as we had brought-to, at a

small place called Sikri Gulli (the Difficult Pass) —a bold projecting point of rock, jutting into the very force of the current,—we saw the drawing-room budgerow from the general's fleet coming down the stream with a fearful velocity, which threatened inevitable destruction upon the rocks, unless prompt assistance could be afforded. The fact was, that the *ghoon*, or tracking-rope, had snapt, while all the crew, except the *manji* and *golia*, were employed on shore in towing; and the boat being of course quite ungovernable in the hands of these two men, was carried away by the force of the current. Three ladies stood upon the roof wringing their hands, and, by their attitudes of entreaty and despair, exhibiting a sense of their imminent peril. The two natives belonging to the boat stood ready to strike out for their lives, the moment she should strike; but the domestic servants, of whom there were two or three on board, displayed much less presence of mind than the ladies, being almost frantic with terror.

The budgerow was about a quarter of a mile from Sikri Gulli point when I descried it. Without a moment's loss of time I collected my crew, and hurried them into my cook-boat, which was light and manageable; we pushed into the middle

of the current, the black fellows plying at their oars with a vigour and excitement which did honour to their gallantry. The ricketty little boat cut through the rushing waters with astonishing velocity, and we had just time to reach the budgrow so as to cast a rope on board her as she glided past us. I called out to the ladies that they were safe, and climbed on board by the rudder, followed by half my crew, who speedily got her paddles into play and brought her head to the stream, though we were then obliged to exert our utmost energies before we could stem the velocity of the current.

The ladies, poor things! were in a pitiable state of alarm, and now that the danger was over, they found leisure for a hearty good cry; and this, we must allow, is a wiser arrangement than if they had given themselves up to tears, while presence of mind was requisite to enable them to take advantage of any luck-stroke, affording an opportunity for escape. It proved that the General's fleet was about a couple of miles a-head, and as it was now too dark for the ladies' boat to return, they were glad to accept our offers of entertainment; for though they had narrowly escaped being frightened out of their wits, they had not been

frightened out of their appetites; and the only provisions of which their drawing-room could boast, —with shame be it spoken,—were a cream-cheese and two bottles of beer. We set in motion all the slaves attached to our *cuisine*, and very quickly provided a suitable repast for our fair guests.

Our party was a merry one, and was kept up with much glee till ten o'clock, when the ladies, tempted by a lovely moonlight night, thought of setting out on foot in search of the remainder of their fleet, as they had only one couch on board for the accommodation of all three. We represented to them that their scheme was wild in the extreme, and probably impracticable, on account of a deep *nulla*, or brook, a little above our position; which from the rocky steepness of its banks, and the depth of its stream, would probably be found impassable; moreover, if this difficulty could be surmounted, they would have two long miles of deep loose sand to wade through, which would perplex the strength and perseverance of the most undaunted among our Anglo-Indian belles. Still they determined to attempt the journey, and to make sport of all difficulties. We again assured them that the thing was impracticable, and that an attempt would be utter madness: but our

arguments availed not; they had made up their minds, and they would try it.

In this state of affairs, it became the bounden duty of us gentlemen knight-errants to set our brightest wits to work, for the purpose of rendering the project feasible, even in opposition to our own opinions. We constructed a sort of sedan, by lashing a couple of strong bamboos to an arm-chair, and in this we hoped to be able to transport our fair charges to the opposite side of the *nulla*. One of the ladies very sensibly took fright at this clever device, and declared in favour of remaining where she was, and we again did our best to dissuade the other two from their purpose: but they called their companion a renegade, and insisted upon making the experiment; so, wrapping their handkerchiefs about their pretty little heads, to keep off the night-dew, they put themselves under our guidance, and sallied forth, full of merriment and ripe for adventure.

When we came to the banks of the *nulla*, we found, as we had foretold, the descent to the water's edge extremely difficult, notwithstanding the brilliancy of the moonlight. The ladies suffered greatly in consequence of the thorns and sharp

stones, from which they had only satin shoes and silk stockings to defend their little feet; and I verily believe that, if we had taken less pains to dissuade them from it, they would never have ventured upon so perilous an undertaking, where a false step, or a rolling stone, might have sent any one of us headlong into the water below, or upon some jutting crag.

The lady whom I was happy enough to have in charge was tall, and a very elegant figure; but her strength was quite unequal to the task she had undertaken, and although both I and my friend who conducted the other young lady, exerted ourselves to the utmost in assisting our fair charges, we found it often impossible to be of use, and as much as we could do to support ourselves. I was more than once fearfully alarmed, when my partner missed her footing in places where, had she fallen, she must inevitably have been dashed to atoms, or at the least have fractured her limbs; but she seemed to be well aware of the easiest way of falling, for whenever she felt herself going, she threw herself down in a sitting posture.

At last, with much fatigue, and no few wounds endured with heroic fortitude, we succeeded in

reaching the bottom of the precipice, when it became necessary to make our way higher up the *nulla*, until the stream should become fordable, and as the rocks were very slippery from slime and weeds, I jumped into the water, which was up to my waist, in order that the lady might the better avail herself of my support, by placing her hand upon my shoulder: in this manner we got on excellently well, until she thought fit to withdraw her hand and refused further assistance, declaring that she could proceed very well by herself, as the ground was perfectly practicable. Poor girl! I dare say her modesty induced her to think that she might have been availing herself too unceremoniously of the aid of a stranger; but her rash attempt to go alone was unfortunate, for she had scarcely declined my support, when her feet slipped from under her, and she fell,—but alas! this was not so happily managed as her former tumbles: I bear witness that she came down heavily, for, being immediately below her, I broke, though I could not save, her fall; the entire weight of her person coming upon me knocked me over, and for many seconds positively kept me under water. I was so completely taken-aback, that, in the confusion of the first immersion, I could find nothing

but legs and arms spread about me like the poles of a shrimp net, of which the petticoats formed the reticulation. Presently I rose from the bottom, and found the unfortunate girl lying half in, half out of the water, laughing so immoderately and fitfully, that I feared hysterics would completely incapacitate her from doing any thing to extricate herself; there she lay in the mud, refusing all assistance, until at last, her strength rapidly quitting her in the violence of her excitement, she exclaimed, "Oh! pray take me out, or I shall die here!"

It was an easy thing to say, "take me out," but the lady was not quite as light as a fairy, nor willing to be lifted like a sack of flour; moreover, the bottom of the brook was muddy, and the edges of the rocks very slippery, so that, having made two or three ineffectual attempts to take her out, after the fashion of carrying an infant, I found myself under the necessity of dragging her ashore somewhat in the manner of landing a fishing-net, hand-over-hand. When I had thus succeeded in drawing the young lady out of the water, she lay for nearly ten minutes in a state very much akin to insensibility; and I was becoming seriously alarmed about her, when she raised herself upon her arm,

exclaiming, with a deep sigh and a broken laugh, "Oh! dear me! how very absurd! how could we have come into this dreadful place?—and with strangers too!"

The other party now came to our assistance, and with some difficulty we managed to place the lady in our sedan-chair, and convey her in safety to the opposite side of the stream; we then returned for the second. Having landed them both, we offered to give up our boats for their accommodation, if they would only return to our fleet, reminding them that their road to their own boats lay over at least two miles of heavy sand: but the difficulties they had gone through in crossing the brook were too terrible to be again encountered, even with the prospect of embarrassments equally perplexing in the advance.

My fair charge was indeed in a very pitiable plight; wet through all over, covered with mud from top to bottom, minus one of her pretty little shoes which had been lost in the mud, and almost exhausted with laughter and fatigue, she still held up with noble fortitude against all her misfortunes, and persevered most admirably in her arduous journey through the sand. I was sensible, however, that her strength was rapidly failing her; for

her arm rested more and more heavily upon mine, until at last she staggered against me for support, and in a feeble voice begged me to place her upon the ground, until I could bring some natives from the boats to carry her home; "for indeed," said she, "I have neither strength nor life left in me."

The other two were far in advance, and I could not think of leaving the young lady in so exposed a situation while I sought assistance; so I sat down by her, and cheered her as well as I was able, until at last I persuaded her to make one more effort: this she did with a most magnanimous spirit; and leading her down close to the water's edge, I found a firmer footing than the loose sand above high-water mark. Thus, with occasional halts, and being half-carried, the poor girl at last, to her infinite joy, arrived at the general's boats, where we found our runaway companions. Here a glass of mulled claret proved by no means unacceptable; after which, bidding our heroines farewell, we lighted our cigars, and retraced our way to our own boats.

My friend was harsh upon the ladies, and said it was all stuff and affectation; nor could he by any argument be persuaded that the affair had been an excellent good frolic, and that adventures of the

kind were too seldom to be met with; but then he was a married man, and his ardour had been somewhat thinned down by five-and-twenty years' service in India; and although a merry fellow over the claret bottle, he was no joker over bruised shins and wet feet. But I must away; I have already devoted a little too much time to the fair adventurers; more particularly when I remember Howard's wholesome advice, and the risk of exclusive attentions, in a country where to dance twice, to shake hands, or to smile, is to be asked your intentions by a guardian or a big brother.

The next place at which we stopped was the little town of Kahalgang, (commonly but improperly spelt Colgong); and here I would recommend all sportsmen who travel this way, more particularly those who love to bag the black partridge, to beat the *ooncha-ghas* junguls upon the southward and westward of the town: I never saw game more abundant, although I had a scanty array of beaters and only one dog.

The scenery around Kahalgang is beautifully picturesque and varied in its character: from the opposite banks of the river, the view is quiet and charming beyond what is usually met with on the Ganges; the grey hills of the Rajhmahal range

a well-turned ancle is not less common than in other parts of India.

I have been led to this subject by the contrast which the women of Kahalgang present to those further eastward: I saw several at the *ghâts* who struck me as being remarkably beautiful, both in feature and figure, although their complexions were exceedingly dark: their forms were particularly slight, and bearing such an air of elegance and graceful ease, as could not fail to attract admiration: their faces too were of a more Grecian mould than I had hitherto seen among them; and in this the effect was considerably heightened by the simplicity of their costume, and the classical style in which the *chuddur*, or large scarf, was thrown across their figures. There is one charm, and by no means a slight one, which is possessed by a large majority of the native women; I speak of their small feet, and particularly good ancles, and of their free and elastic step, which may well excite the envy of any beholding Englishwoman, with her pinching satin shoe and delicate silk stocking. But who, among our starched and tight-laced, though naturally lovely women, would venture to place the charms of her cramped figure in competition with the unshackled graces ex-

hibited among these children of nature? God makes the one, and the mantua-maker the other.

About sixteen or seventeen miles higher up the river, stands Bhagulpore, a mean, dirty-looking town, lying in a very beautiful indentation of the river, and the capital of the extensive and opulent district of the same name. It possesses an extensive manufacture and mart for various descriptions of silk and cotton goods; but still the inhabitants, who are estimated at about 30,000, do not appear to thrive: whether this is, generally speaking, attributable to over-taxation, or any other cause in particular, I am unable to state on any better authority than inference by analogy.

I cannot forbear to mention a conversation I had with a villager, in a small place called Patarghur, about a mile to the N.W. of the capital, as exposing the injudicious system of exorbitant taxation. I am far from intimating that there is any intention of inordinate exaction on the part of our government; for it is probable that the evil of which I speak, exists in the abuse of authority among the native officers employed in the collection or assessment of the revenue.

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RUINS AT BHAGULPORE.

spirits from grain; and I casually entered into conversation with him, for the purpose of gaining what little information I might, with regard to the process, &c. In the course of his story, he informed me that at times he sold large quantities of liquor for at least six times what it cost him to distil it. I immediately remarked to him that, such being the case, he must doubtlessly be a very rich man, notwithstanding his squalid appearance and the evident misery of his hut.

"Rich, sir!" said the poor emaciated being, extending his bony arm, "is a man to be called rich, when he is starving? My wife and children would die of absolute want if I were to allow myself the luxury of one sufficient meal daily. I must give up trade if the *Tahseeldar* will not remit me a portion of the duty levied upon my still. I am now in arrear, from inability to pay, and shall soon have my still seized, if God does not aid me: then I shall be cast into prison and my family will starve."

I inquired what rate of tax he paid to the treasury, and he assured me that he was required to send in daily a sum of eight rupees; that the average sale of his wine amounted to about ten rupees, leaving only two for the price of material,



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RUINS AT BHAGULPORE.

labour, wear-and-tear, and the consumption of his furnace.

"However," continued he, "this is my fate, what can I do? If God please, my fortune will mend ere long, or otherwise I shall die. I do expect some amelioration of my poverty presently, as there are going to be several marriages in the village; and then, of course, there will be a great demand for my wine: for God has wisely ordained, for my benefit, that men shall get drunk at all festive opportunities. Then, again, if it should please God that all these young married women should have families, why there will be more *shraub* drank upon the little-ones' birthdays; so that I may yet become a rich man, if I can only manage to live in the interim."

In this way, a native merchant, even of the lowest grade, will he found as sanguine and as speculative as John Bull upon exchange: he has always an eye to the collateral chances of "turning a penny;" and he will be found just as particular as John Bull, Esquire, himself, as to whether the penny be an honest one or not.

Before quitting this village, Patarghur, I must not omit to mention two very extraordinary round towers, which are by tradition said to have been

built by a company of the *Jhaina* caste, who travelled from Mysore, in the latter part of the thirteenth century. This account has some support beyond mere tradition, in the circumstance that the towers, which are held very sacred by the *Jhains*, are similar in structure to those found in many parts of Mysore, more particularly at Seravana Belgala. Numbers of this sect of Hindus are to be found in the territories of the Jeypore Rajha, and from hence pilgrimages are frequently performed to the towers in question.

The hills lying to the north and north-east of Rajhmahal and Bhagulpore are visible for many miles along the course of the river. They are abrupt and craggy, and in most places impassable, except through the winding tracks around their bases; and very many of these have been rendered impracticable by artificial barriers raised in former times by the natives, as a military defence. Although these hills are rich in soil, and very abundant when cultivated, agriculture seems to be little attended to; probably on account of the pristine habits and abstemious mode of life in which the natives exist; for idleness is by no means a characteristic of the class, though stupidity and perfect contentment decidedly are so.

Along the foot of these hills are large *jheels*, or lakes, which continue without drying up throughout the year; and in the neighbourhood of these is found a curious white clay, of a very fine consistency and of great reputed virtue among natives; large quantities of it being eaten by those women, whose prayers at the shrine of Brahma, the creative deity, have been unavailing; it is also used in the nourishment of the mother and the babe; it is called by natives *kuhári*, and is found immediately below the surface of the earth. In appearance, it closely resembles chalk, but it is found not to be calcareous, and may be ground into a gelatinous paste; in which form it is much used as a paint, and for putting a smooth surface upon various wooden articles, previous to their being painted, such as toys, ornaments, and various small domestic utensils.

Proceeding north-west, we came to the rocky islands of Jehanghira, about twenty miles above Bhagulpore; these rocks are very similar to those at Kahalgang, but larger and more picturesque; more interesting also, inasmuch as they are frequently mentioned in the history of the olden time. A very eagle's-nest of a Hindu temple is perched upon the apex of the largest of these small isles,

the access to which is by a broken irregular stair of unhewn stone, by no means easy of ascent. As an additional security to this wild position, the unconnected points of rock have been rendered very defensible by means of massive portions of masonry built in between the crags. The place is tenanted by a little fraternity of *fakhirs*, or Hindu devotees, who hold it in right of certain rent paid to government for the same; and these miserable-looking, denuded old beggars, are said to be exceedingly wealthy, and to fare sumptuously every day.

The moment an European's boat heaves in sight, an aged *fakhir*, in no very modest attire, having his hair bound around his head in the form of serpents, his face painted yellow and white, his beard dyed red, and his body smeared all over with oil and ashes, is seen paddling off from his island, in a little bit of a *dingi*, just large enough to hold himself and an assistant *gossein*. With the utmost perseverance, he pushes his boat alongside of the traveller's, and follows closely all his movements, chattering and screaming, until the patience of the Englishman being fully exhausted, a trifle is bestowed, for the sake of being rid of his tormenting importunities. The old vagabond then



by Lieut. Bacon.

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drops astern to the next boat, where, after the same fashion, he will, in all probability, extort a further largess; and, thus he is said to collect very large sums of money from the constant succession of passengers up and down the river.

All that I could collect of the ancient history of these rocky strongholds, was from an old *fakhir* in the village; together with comments and other hints by a respectable old *jemmadar* who had formerly served as a soldier under Colonel Skinner. These men informed me, that, during the reign of Aurungzebe, the temple, which has since been rebuilt, was the haunt of a band of *jogis*, who had made this place their head-quarters, and the depôt of an immense treasure, the fruits of their extortion. When Aurungzebe marched upon Benares, he detached a small division from his forces against Monghir, with orders, if they were successful in this first object, to proceed down the river to Jehanghira, and sack the treasury of the old miserly devotees. The party were fortunate in their execution of these orders, and carried off from the latter place an enormous amount of specie, besides vast numbers of valuable jewels and vessels of gold: the *looht*, or booty, is said to have amounted to fifty *lahks* of rupees, or £500,000

English money. The *jogis* were driven forth from their hive, and the original temple was partially destroyed: that which now stands upon the island is a modern erection, though built upon the foundation and of the materials of the former one. This fact is borne out by the evidence of the masonry; but for the verity of the details just given I will not be answerable, my information being collected from rather a doubtful source.

We continued to keep in company with the general's party, for since our adventure at Sikri Gulli, we had been exceedingly good friends. The old gentleman seemed to think he could not sufficiently return our attentions to his girls; and if his fare were scant, and his wine a little acetous, the evil was balanced by the abundant smiles and vivacity of the ladies. After the first experiment, too, it was easy to fortify our appetites against further punishment by taking in a stock of provisions before-hand, sufficient to last out the campaign, whenever the old general challenged us to do battle upon his veteran mutton and impenetrable poultry.

Our time upon the water was spent pleasantly enough, and a return to the dull routine of cantonment life was no enviable anticipation; for the

perpetual change of scene and the freedom of life while moving were more than a compensation for the loss of balls, plays, dinners, and the whole list of fashionable entertainments. The ladies, I own, hardly coincided in this opinion; though they did not hesitate to appropriate the compliment, they refused to return it, and with more candour than flattery, confessed that, notwithstanding our delightful society, they began to sigh for a change of amusements, and a change of admirers. The scraping of a quadrille band had more charms for them than the chanting of the forest bird, and laces and jewels possessed an interest far surpassing that which they could be sensible of in viewing an Indian scene, if it were ever so picturesque. If the cottage and its overhanging foliage had been English, there might certainly have been some pleasure in looking at them; but to admire a dirty Indian mud hut, half-buried in jungul, would really be ridiculous in the extreme.

It is truly amusing, that the whole Anglo-Indian community, when in India, unite in unmeasured abuse of every thing which bears stamp or semblance of the Eastern world; but the moment they return to their own country, that alone is tolerated which is Indian. India is a world to be

lauded to the skies: nothing is to be found so grand, so convenient, or so good, as it may be had in India. Indian scenery, Indian sport, Indian beauties, Indian servants, Indian luxuries, become the themes of endless commendations, as much as they were once the objects of endless abuse.

Two days more tracking brought us to the old fort and town of Monghir, built upon a high prominent point of rocky land, which juts out to the very centre of the river. This place, which is excellently fortified by nature, was the strong-hold of Sultan Suja, during his rebellion against the rule of his father, Shah Jehan. It was subsequently further strengthened by Kassim Ali, at the time of his insurrection against the British power; but the English gained possession of the place after a very short siege. The fortifications, at least those constructed by man, are in some places falling to decay, their value being lost when, in the extension of British dominion, Monghir ceased to be a frontier post; indeed, the whole of the works have never been re-modelled for the purposes of modern warfare, only a portion of the walls being perforated for artillery.

The population of Monghir is said to be nearly forty thousand; but where they are all stowed

away, it is not easy to conceive, for the town does not appear to contain many houses, although they are strewed over a large extent of ground; the larger portion of people are artificers in wood and iron, and in all descriptions of fans and small articles of house furniture. The blacksmiths are very expert in imitating European articles, almost equal to the model in appearance, but, from the inferiority of the material, of small utility. Especially, let an inexperienced hand beware of the "real genuine Joe Mantons, exchanged by a gentleman for a gun of native manufacture a few days since:" they are counterfeit, and ten to one are the chances that the barrel will burst in the first day's sport. This inferiority is in some degree owing to the poorness of the metal, and in a further measure to the scanty use of carbon, and what is vulgarly called *elbow-grease;* it is not that they neglect to bestow sufficient labour and pains upon the manufacture; a man will fiddle away with a file or a graver at one little spot for a week, but he does not understand the necessity or advantage of a liberal application of the sledge-hammer; or, otherwise, he is averse to the fatigue in working it. It is impossible to over-tax the patience of a native in any sort of fiddle-faddle employment; he finds

gradually expanding in its progress through the green valley, until it mingles with the current of the giant Ganges. I beheld this exquisite scene both under the red colouring of the setting sun, when all nature seemed to be yielding gold, and then again bathed in the delicate tinting of the grey morning mists; both were equally lovely.

Thirty-five miles above Bar, and upon the same bank, stands Patna, a large and flourishing native city, very similar in its appearance to all other native cities upon the banks of the rivers, having many handsome old buildings, and many dirty mud huts piled in intricate confusion, one above the other, from the water's edge. The effect is strange and picturesque; but we shall have better specimens higher up the river, and will therefore delay the fervour of our admiration.

Patna enjoys an extensive trade in cottons and cloths of great varieties, as also in hides, wax, wax-candles, and ready-made shoes. Some of the *mahajans*, or shop-keepers and merchants of this town, are said to be very affluent. Though living for the most part in miserable little hovels, not so commodious or half so cleanly as an English farmer's dog-kennel, their coffers are said to be



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overflowing with wealth: this report is certainly warranted by their appearance. In India, it is usual to judge of a native's purse by the size of his corporation; if he be a Falstaff, he is an opulent man; if he be better qualified to personate the Spectre Bridegroom, he is infallibly a pauper.

The moment a native is rich enough to afford to be lazy, he at once forbears to exert himself personally, and pays another man to do his work for him; he builds a temple or a *ghát*, to gain himself a name, and pave his way to heaven, and then he seats himself upon his haunches for the remainder of his existence, enjoying the *otium cum dig*. in a style worthy of a prince, having nothing in the world to do but to stuff himself with curry, rice, and *ghee* (clarified butter), and smoke his *kullian* or *hookka*; towards evening he may be found in a most paradisiacal stupor from the fumes of his drugged pipe and from chewing opium.

On the eastern bank, just opposite to Patna, the river Gunduk flows into the Ganges, and at the point of confluence, the river spreads itself over an immense space of country; the distance from Hajjipore, which is at the entrance of the Gunduk, to Bankipore, just above Patna, being

something more than five miles. In the centre of the stream are two large sand-banks, which are constantly shifting their locality, so as to render the navigation of the river very perplexing. The junction of the two rivers is held sacred among the Hindus, and Hajjipore, therefore, thrives amazingly, from the concourse of pilgrims who flock to the place for the purpose of ablution. There is a large annual fair held at this place, where excellent country cattle are often to be met with, at a low price; but much caution and experience are necessary, to avoid the artful impositions of the native horse-dealers, who, like their more civilised brethren in the trade, are up to every artifice by which they may take-in the unskilful.

Continuing our progress about ten miles up the river, we find Dinapore, a considerable military station. The same description of manufactures and commerce as were offered to the traveller at Patna will be again exhibited at this place. It is impossible to conceive how these goods can be sold for their market price. A shoemaker will stand for hours together at your boat, bothering you to purchase a pair of shoes, well-made and of excellent materials, for the sum of eight annas, about ten-pence. A maund, that is forty seers,

or about eighty pounds, of wax-candles, may be purchased for forty rupees, or something less than £4. Table-cloths, napkins, and many other useful cotton goods, may be bought at a proportionably low price, though it cannot be denied that the texture is much inferior to European manufactures; this last, however, is of little moment to a poor beggarly subaltern on half-batta.

The Company's European Regiment were at Dinapore at the time of our visit, and in the evening we beaux prevailed upon our fair fellow-travellers to walk with us up to the barrack square, to hear the band play, and review the fashionables of the station. Such a sudden influx of petticoats and beauty as appeared that evening in the square, created quite a sensation among the quiet-going half-batta folks of Dinapore; inquiries were immediately made as to who we were, and the desired information having been obtained, we were presently overwhelmed with calls and invitations. A ball was even proposed for us, if we would remain a day or two; but, having troops with us, we were compelled to decline the proffered compliment.

About five miles from the cantonment is Bankipore, the civil station, whither I went, with our commanding officer, upon a visit to a friend, for

the purpose of seeing the Gola, an enormous granary built of masonry, in the form of a bee-hive, and which was erected by our Government, many years since, for the supply of their troops in case of famine. The plan of the thing is ridiculous in the extreme, and utterly inapplicable to the purpose intended. Upon the summit of the cone, is a large hole, which is reached by two staircases externally, and through which it was intended to shoot the grain; at the base is a small door, by which it was proposed to take out the required supply.

The building is one hundred feet in height, by one hundred in diameter, and the walls at the base are twenty feet in thickness; the work was undertaken and completed ere the folly and impracticability of the design occurred to the wise heads who planned it. A second thought was alone sufficient to set aside the feasibility of the scheme. The door at the base once opened, could never be again closed, on account of the enormous pressure of the grain, which would continue to flow forth until the door should be buried and choked; and then again, the accumulation of so much grain in so high a temperature would engender a fermentation, which, in despite of twenty feet of ma-

sonry, would have blown the Gola into the skies. It has never been put to the use for which it was intended, and never will be; at present, it is occupied as a store-room and magazine. The general opinion appears to be that this, and one or two similar buildings in other places, were designed as a mere job or bonus to the engineer who perpetrated their erection.

With a diminished number, we set sail from Dinapore, the general's party having taken leave of us, and sorry were we to part with such merry companions. The river Sone (from *sona*, gold) enters the Ganges about eight miles above Dinapore; and here the stream is very difficult of navigation, being cut up in rapids and sand-banks, which are continually fluctuating. In the bed of this river are found some very beautiful agates and other pebbles, brought down from the Gundwana mountains by the force of the current; these stones are susceptible of a very high polish, and are com monly made up into small boxes and trinkets.

While wandering in one of the villages upon the banks of this river, I had a narrow escape from one of the domestic buffaloes, commonly used by the *raiuts* (farmers) as beasts of burden, and for the purposes of agriculture. The brute

ran at me with great ferocity, and would most probably have done me serious injury, had I not been prepared to receive him. I had fortunately in my hand a heavy bamboo, shod with iron, and just as the animal, with depressed head and advanced horns, had arrived within arm's length, I slipped on one side, and with all my force dealt him a blow upon the forehead as he rushed past me. The blow took right good effect, for the beast staggered a few paces, uttering a low moaning noise, and twisting his head about like Diggory "striving to cry over Statira," in "All the World's a Stage." I made a rapid retreat, not being over anxious to witness the conclusion of the scene.

This is the only instance which I remember to have met with of a domestic buffalo showing fight, though I have frequently passed through large herds of them. They are a valuable animal to the natives, for, in addition to their being used as baggage beasts and in the yoke, they tread corn or clay, carry water, and also supply the dairies with milk. Horses are very seldom made use of by the *raiuts* in tilling their land. Beside these buffaloes, bullocks are also used for the purposes of cultivation, and in transporting baggage or merchandize.

In the lower provinces of Bengal, a camel is as rarely seen as in England; carriage of goods, &c. being effected by means of a very primitive description of cart, called a *hackeri*, constructed of bamboos, and having two wheels, which appear to be necessarily *ungreased:* two, four, six, or more bullocks are generally yoked, I cannot say fastened or harnessed, to this vehicle, by means of a bar passed over the necks of the wheelers, there being at each end of the bar a peg to secure it from slipping off laterally; and this is the only yoke by which the beast is attached to his work: so that if he should be inclined to bolt, through fright or other cause, and he be lucky enough to have no horns, he can easily cast off his burden by bobbing his head, and slipping it under the bar; and then away he scours across the country, through swamp and thorny bramble, in spite of the enraged efforts of the driver, clinging to his tail, in the hope of bringing him back to a sense of his duty.

them. I rushed at the gradually increasing precipice which stood between life and death, and with a bound such as I never accomplished before or since, I sprung over the terrible chasm to *terra firma*. Ah, ha! it was a near touch; tremendous as I believe the leap to have been, I did not clear it, but hung upon the brink of the new-formed cliff by the middle, clinging to the ground even with my very teeth, until I succeeded in drawing myself entirely up. Before I had done so I heard the crash of the land-slip in the waters below: so enormous was the mass which fell, that large splashes of mud and water were thrown into the windows of the budgerows, at a distance of two or three hundred yards, and a small boat, which happened to be nearer than the rest, was nearly swamped altogether by the violent commotion of the water. The ground upon which I now stood appeared rather suspicious, so I hastened forthwith to place my precious person in a situation of greater security, having no ambition for a second display of my agility.

This, I think, should be a warning to others not to approach too closely to the crumbling banks of this mighty river, lest, as does not unfrequently happen, they should suddenly be given over as food

for the monsters of the flood, *amphibiæ*, *pisces*, and *vermes*.

By-the-bye, here have I been for the past six weeks upon the river without taking any notice of the inhabitants of the waters over which I have been travelling. The mightiest of these is the alligator. If the reader be a naturalist, his interest must be kindled, and he will immediately clear his voice :—" Ah ! Alligator, hum ! Class third, amphibia ; order, reptiles ; genus, lacerta ; generic character ; body four-footed, tailed, naked, and long, having no secondary integument ; legs equal ; species, lacerta alligator," &c. &c. If the reader be not a natural historian, or pretender of the same, he will yawn at the very sight of class, order, genus, &c. ; so I will leave the learned one to go on with his technical discourse in soliloquy, while I just say a few words touching these animals in a very plain way.

In the Ganges are found two species of them ; one, a broad snub-nosed fellow, known in India by the Hindostani name *muggur*, is by far the most formidable monster of the two. It is said to grow to the length of thirty-five or forty feet in the Sunderbunds ; but I have never chanced to meet with one exceeding five-and-twenty. The back is

guarded with an armour so thick and hard, as to be impervious to a rifle-ball; a good marksman, however, need not despair of obtaining a specimen, if with a trusty weapon he can manage to get within five-and-thirty yards; the eye, the side of the neck, the joint of the fore-arm, either in front or rear, are all good points of attack; but one ball will seldom do sufficient execution to secure the beast from escape; three or four shots are generally required to disable him so that the *dandies* may engage him with safety. This they perform with great spirit, by casting a noose round his mouth and another over his tail, and while the ropes are held tight, three or four fellows run in upon him and turn him upon his back, or in some instances chop off his tail. Neither action can be effected without risk of injury; for, in spite of all efforts to hold him down, unless the brute be very near death, he lashes out with his tail in a style, which, if the blow took effect, would leave a man a very small chance of life.

As soon as the animal is pretty well secured, a long knife or dagger is run into his throat, and in ten minutes afterwards, all the tit-bits of him will be stewing and bubbling in the black fellows' cooking-pots. The tail is most esteemed, being

much the firmest, and at the same time most delicate part about him; it really makes a very tolerable *beef-steak*. People *do* say, that they are not very choice in their selection of food, and tell long stories about *bangles* and other ornaments found in their bellies; may be they do occasionally run off with a black child, but that of which I tasted a morsel was none the worse for it, if he had done so. I fancy they feed principally upon fish, though it is possible they do not hesitate to devour most edible things which may come in their way: dogs, cats, goats, pigs, calves, and even buffaloes are said to be swallowed wholesale by these monsters; but, touching the last mentioned of these delicacies, I confess I *do* feel a *leetle* sceptical.

The other species to be found in the Ganges is, perhaps, more numerous than the former; it differs from it principally in having a less impenetrable covering upon its back, as also a narrower and much longer head, in which the teeth are sharper and more regular, than are the gate-post-looking things standing round the jaws of the other; the head becomes taper towards the nose, where it is terminated by a snout like that of a pig. This animal seldom exceeds twenty feet in length. Its

habits are, I believe, very similar to those of the *muggur*, except in one particular. The latter bores a deep hole in the side of the hard sandy cliff, wherein the female deposits her eggs, and nourishes her young; while the former, called by the natives the *ghurriál*, or *koomheer*, simply lodges its eggs beneath the surface of the sand, where they are hatched by the heat of the sun; these eggs are spherical, and no larger than a billiard-ball.

Old Gunga also harbours the turtle (*testudo lutaria*), but these are too well known to need minute description; they are about eighteen inches in diameter, weighing from thirty to forty pounds when full grown. They are only eaten by the lower orders, being a dirty, muddy, omnivorous sort of animal.

A great variety of fish may be found in the river, among which the *mahsir*, *bihkti*, *roui*, *tupsi*, and many others, are exceedingly delicate, and in much request for the breakfast tables of the European gentry. Prawns, too, and other crustaceous fish, are to be had, but there is a strong prejudice against eating them, among many squeamish people. I readily give testimony in favour of these little fish, for their delicacy, and their peculiarly delicious flavour when curried.

The otter, the porpoise, the water-snake, and many other less important creatures, make up the sum of those who inhabit the waters of the vast Ganges.

Upon the banks are to be found tigers, buffaloes, *neilghuy*, wild hog, antelope, hyenas, wolves, jackals, hares, &c. &c. Wild fowl, too, are very plentiful; geese of several varieties, ducks of many sorts, teal, widgeon, plover, &c. &c., and game in the same abundance, of nearly every kind which can be mentioned. Besides these, pelicans, cranes, storks, gulls, and fishing birds innumerable, are to be met with here.

Sixty miles above Revelgunge, we passed the little town of Buxar, which is overlooked by a bit of a fort, bearing the same name. This is converted into an invalid depôt, and in the neighbourhood is a portion of the Company's stud. Seven miles higher up the river, are some very pretty ruins of an old fortress, called Chounsa; and, again, two miles beyond these, are similar remains, called Bherepore; but these latter are not so picturesque as the former. From hence, a winding course of twenty-four miles brings the traveller to Ghazipore, a military station upon the north bank of the river, now occupied by a single corps of infantry, though

it was formerly prepared for the accommodation of two cavalry corps, in addition to the infantry; here is also a branch of the Company's stud for the supply of the Horse Artillery and Cavalry.

The station is neat and cleanly in appearance, and has a fine open plain around it, which serves as a military parade-ground and a promenade for the fashionables: the favourite lounge is in front of a small free-stone cenotaph, to the memory of the Marquis Cornwallis, where, during the cool of the evening, the band of the regiment frequently plays. This monument to the memory of the noble marquis is scarcely worthy of the illustrious name it records: it is anything but an elegant structure. The pillars supporting the entablature are intended to be Doric, but they are out of proportion, being much too lofty for their bases; the entablature itself is very heavy, and it is surmounted by a frightful dome, perched upon a sort of attic story, than which nothing can be less symmetrical; altogether it is a most clumsy ill-constructed building, offering no one feature worthy of admiration.

Fifteen lahks of rupees, about £150,000, of the government property, was expended, or rather squandered, upon this mausoleum, and the statue

which adorns the interior. This figure is colossal, in the Roman costume, and crowned with a wreath of laurel, holding a sword of justice in one hand and an olive branch in the other; the pedestal on which the figure stands displays the figures of a soldier and a *sipáhi*, in attitudes of dejection and mourning; the work was executed by Flaxman, and its chief beauty is its simplicity.

Bishop Heber, in his journal, has made a strange mistake respecting this monument: he has given a most just critique upon the architecture, and continues,—"above all, the building is utterly unmeaning; it is neither a temple, nor a tomb, neither has altar, statue, or inscription." Now this is a sad blunder; not only is there Flaxman's statue, but the pedestal bears two inscriptions, one in English and the other in Persian.

This error at first appears hardly to be accounted for; but in his narrative, the Bishop tells us that he visited this cenotaph, or rather that he had an opportunity of seeing it, during his evening drive: so it is very possible that, without taking the trouble of alighting from his carriage to ascertain if the building contained anything, he took for granted there was no statue, because he did not see one.

Ghazipore has, from time immemorial, been celebrated for its abundance of roses; whole fields of these sweet flowers are cultivated here for the manufacture of rose-water, and of a spurious decoction, which they call *attar*, in imitation of the Persian, but which is quite valueless. The rose-water is very delicious, a gallon of the best may be purchased for about seven shillings.

Above Ghazipore, the river becomes tediously serpentine, and it is rendered difficult of navigation by innumerable sand-banks and shallows. The distance from Ghazipore to Benares, in a direct line, is not more than thirty-six miles, but by following the windings of the river, the distance is increased to at least seventy. We arrived at this city upon the 15th of December, and I was highly delighted with the place. It is built upon the acclivity of a high sloping bank, spreading over the crest towards the level country; the greater number of the buildings appear to be temples and religious edifices, and the water's edge is a continued line of *ghâts* and handsome stone steps, in various styles of architecture, the designs being almost as multifarious as those of the temples. Throughout the whole of this vast Hindu city, I do not think two temples or two *ghâts* will

be found in the same fashion of architecture: they are piled up, one above the other, in the most elaborate but imposing confusion, being beautifully decorated, and some of them fancifully coloured.

All these buildings are belonging to the Hindus, with one exception, and that is a grand one, which attracts the immediate notice of visitors. It is a large mosque, or place of Moslem worship, the only one in the city, beautified with two very slender minarets of great height, standing above the multitude of Hindu temples with a proud air of superiority. This mosque was built by Aurungzebe, after his capture of Benares: it stands upon the site of a very magnificent temple of the Hindus, which was destroyed by the Mogul prince in the heat of his bigotry; and with this for a foundation, he erected that fine majestic building, which now out-tops all the temples of a contemned race of idolaters. The effect of the *musjid* is particularly striking, standing out thus the proud and solitary representative of the religion to which it is devoted, and laughing to scorn, as it were, the less imposing structures of an inimical faith. There is very little ornament about it, and some parts of it appear never to have been completed.

In the census of 1803, the population of this city was estimated at 585,000 souls, of which one twelfth part only were Mussulmans. It is said that the native merchants here are very opulent, and I can well believe it; for, in my stroll through the town, I beheld many very ponderous-looking old *mahajans;* independent of which, I inspected at several shops manufactures of immense value. The chief of these were the *king-kaubs*, or cloths interwoven with gold and silver; muslins embroidered with the same; scarfs, gown-pieces, and articles of grand nativé clothing, wrought in the same metals; besides these, fringes and ornaments of every kind are made of the same precious materials.

The fort of Chunar is the next place at which we stopped. It is called by the natives Chunalghur, or Ninaghur, and is situated just twenty miles from the former city. The fort, though small, is capable of strong defence: the works are chiefly in the native fashion, having a succession of walls, built one behind the other, up the high bank upon which they stand. The chief article of commerce is tobacco, which is cultivated in sufficient quantities for the supply of all the pipes and *hookkas* in the presidency.

Historians affirm that this fort existed as early

as the beginning of the eleventh century, and that it was fortified by Sultan Mohummed, as a stronghold, previously to his descent upon Benares, in 1017. The rock upon which the fort stands is upwards of two hundred feet high: the place was captured by us in 1763. It is now a commissariat and invalid depôt.

About thirty-two miles further to the westward, we come to the town of Mirzapore, having a brisk trade in cotton and carpets of its own manufacture. We stopped a few days at this place, and were hospitably entertained by the good people of the station. A strange meeting took place between one of the officers of our fleet, and an old medical gentleman. These two had not seen each other for more than twenty years, and I fancy they were rather inclined to have had the meeting postponed for twenty years longer, if it had not come suddenly upon them. They had parted in wrath, and now met without any amelioration of their antipathies, on one side at least.

The case was this. When lads, they had met at the table of a mutual friend, in some out-station. The lady of the house was indisposed, and did not make her appearance at table, but as soon as the cloth was removed, the doctor received a summons

to attend her in her chamber. If report speaks truth, he was at this time a gay Lothario, and a dangerous practitioner among the ladies, although a married man. The room in which the lady lay was exactly opposite to the dining-room, and after the doctor had left the table, the other young gent. was so situated that, in a mirror, he beheld a scene passing in the sick chamber, which drew from him an involuntary exclamation. The landlord, with the true susceptibility of a husband's confidence, darted a glance of question at the tell-tale, where he beheld—*O tempora! O mores!*—He seized the nearest claret bottle and rushed into the sick bed-room, whence he precipitately expelled the trespassing doctor, with divers unequivocal marks of his displeasure. After this, the poor doctor, attributing the loss of his eye to the treacherous agency of the officer who unintentionally exposed him, conceived a malignant antipathy to him, and loved not that he should be named in his presence.

Eighty miles above Mirzapore is Allahabad, called by the natives Illahabads, or otherwise *par excellence Prayag*, "the Holy," being held peculiarly sacred among the Hindus, because it is the point of confluence of the Jumna and Ganges. On

the extreme headland, between these two rivers, stands the fort; it is partly old and partly modern in its structure; the faces commanding the river being built upon the old walls, and many of the store-rooms and other buildings within the works being Hindu temples, tombs, and chambers modernised. These were originally constructed by the Emperor Akbur, whose apt discrimination duly appreciated the importance of such a position as a stronghold, both for the purposes of national security and for commerce. Upon the in-land front, handsome fortifications, on Vauban's system, have been raised by our government, consisting of two bastions, a demi-bastion, and three ravelins, entered by an elegant gate of Grecian architecture.

The town is dirty and insignificant, being built principally of mud and *chaupper* (mats), but it is said to contain twenty-five thousand inhabitants, independent of the many pilgrims ever to be found within it: most of the old tombs and sacred buildings have been destroyed for the sake of the materials. The banks of the river all around the point furnish amusement in the scenes they present. The infatuated pilgrims are to be seen performing all sorts of absurd antics and ceremonies, and going through all the various forms of ablution and prayer.

In every direction, barbers are beheld with their bundles of apparatus under their arms, running busily from man to man, in hope of employment; and numberless groups are squatting upon the banks, undergoing the infliction of tonsure with infinite patience; and happy is he who hath "more hair than wit," as Antipholus says in the Comedy of Errors, for of all those who have "the wit to lose their hair," every man believes that in paradise he shall enjoy twenty thousand years of bliss for every single hair shorn from his body within sight of the confluence.

Pursuing our course up the Ganges, we found the navigation exceedingly tedious, and had little scenery or incident of sufficient value to balance our annoyances; the game however upon the Oude side is very abundant, and we enjoyed excellent sport among the *grunters*, or, in civilized phraseology, among the wild hog. I was first made aware of the presence of these animals by coming suddenly upon an old tusked boar, while strolling in the junguls, so as nearly to put my foot in his open mouth: I most fortunately had my gun in my hand, and placed him *hors de combat* at once, by sending a bullet through his loins, which brought him to the earth and prevented him from rising

again upon his hind legs: though I found a second ball through his *os frontis*, necessary to my security; for in the extremity of his wrath, he was dragging his body towards me with no very amicable display of his armed jaws. That evening, at the hour of dinner, joints and portions of him were smoking upon nearly every table throughout the fleet.

The flesh of the wild boar is excellent, if he be not too old, and if he be skilfully handled immediately after death; the flavour differs considerably from that of domestic swine, and is certainly more delicate; the hams especially are very superior. The beast feeds principally upon roots, and is known to be of most cleanly habits.

The distance from Allahabad to Cawnpore is one hundred and forty miles, following the course of the river; but, during the whole of this space, I have nothing of particular interest to record. We arrived at this latter place upon the 13th of January 1833, having been three months upon the river: a change from boats to tents was therefore looked forward to with much pleasure.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAWNPORE, AND THE MARCH FROM THENCE TO MERAT.

I CANNOT say that I found anything in Cawnpore which would lead me to concur in the extravagant eulogiums passed upon the place by Miss Emma Roberts; and although this may have been in a measure owing to the shortness of my visit, or to my want of good taste and good fortune, still I feel it incumbent upon me to speak of this, and of all other places, as I have known them, and not as they may be reported of by others. Miss Roberts, having been resident in Cawnpore, is doubtless better qualified to form an opinion of its merits and demerits than a visitor can be; and I must, therefore, offer my observations with submission to her better judgment.

The cantonment is scattered over six or seven miles of country, and appears to have been gradually increased without method or any regard

to convenience. It is a succession of narrow, dusty *gullies*, or lanes, between the mud walls which enclose the gardens of the officers' bungalows, and possesses no picturesque points or pleasing scenery, except a few good groups of buildings and huts upon the water's edge. Indeed, I saw literally nothing at Cawnpore which at all excited my interest or admiration, during the ten days of our sojourn at the place.

The first public occasion which offered itself for mustering the society of the station, was a review of the military under the general of the division. This I had the pleasure of seeing—No, I am wrong; I did not see it, nor did any other person present, not even the inspecting general himself: the most I can say is, that I was upon the ground at the time that the troops were said to be under review,—they were certainly under a cloud of dust;—for, having myself the misfortune of arriving upon the ground just after the evolutions had commenced, the only evidence I had of the military operations going forward was in the trampling of horses, the rattling of accoutrements, and the discharges of artillery: not one single man or horse of the whole martial array did I behold, until after the conclusion of the display,

and then a light breeze springing up, by great good fortune, carried off the huge white curtain of dust, which had hitherto hung over the scene; and thus we obtained sight of the line of troops, just as they were going through the general-salute previous to dismissal.

They were a line of *millers*, truly. Upon the right, the post of precedence, were the Horse Artillery; on their left were his Majesty's 16th regiment of Lancers; then came the Foot Artillery, and within the still lingering cloud of dust were three regiments of Native Infantry, and one of Native Light Cavalry: the whole, from right to left, both men and horses, clad in most uniform suits of modest *drab* over their more shewy regimentals of scarlet and blue. The dust was a local misfortune, and certainly could not be prevented; therefore, undoubtedly it was wisest to grin and bear it, even at the expense of soiled gold lace, or an attack of ophthalmia.

In the evening, I attended an amateur play at the Station Theatre: and here I was as much delighted as I had been at the review. The house is a long quadrangular, rat-trap-like building, in which those who might have the good fortune to sit in the rear, would certainly hear no single word

from the stage. This evil, however, may very possibly be less felt here than it would be elsewhere; for, judging by the "beggarly account of empty benches," exhibited upon the occasion in question, there can be little competition for the best seats. A more unfortunate display of bad management never was made upon any stage.

Many of the scenes had been designed and painted by a master-hand, Captain Luard, formerly of the 16th Lancers; but their effect and stage-delusion were utterly destroyed by bad selections, and most clumsy shifting. At the change of a scene, you might behold the respective wings of two separate running-scenes thrust forward to meet each other; a palace, or saloon, and the interior of a dungeon, very possibly presented as moieties of the same picture; then, upon the mistake being discovered, one of the wings would probably be withdrawn, and another wrong one would take its place; then a forest-slip would be run in as a wall for a chapel, or a sea-piece would make its appearance in place of a boudoir, a round table with a green-baize cloth upon it within his Majesty's state-room, or a gilt chair in a cottage.

The acting, if such it could be called, was equally

execrable. Who the manager might have been, I know not, but the characters were badly cast, ridiculously dressed, and, to a man, without the remotest conception of stage-knowledge or stage-address. Grouping was lost sight of altogether; no personage had any determinate walk or position on the stage; every man did that which was right in his own eyes, and the certain consequence was, that they were continually in one another's way, and played *against* instead of *to* one another. Fixed *entrées* and *exits* were out of the question: you might see the heroine, expecting her lover, look off the stage upon the O.P.* side, exclaiming, "Ah, here he comes!" when in blunders the hero P.S., just behind his mistress. Again, black servants in their ordinary garbs might be seen walking coolly across the stage during the performance, or acting the part of stage-waiters; with an infinity of the like bad management, displaying fully to the audience all the arcana and trickery of the stage.

After the play, I went to a ball at the assembly-rooms; the apartments were handsome and well lighted, and the company consisted of three ladies and about five-and-twenty officers in full-dress; and, in this case, it would appear, as an exception to

* O.P. Opposite Prompter.—P. S. Prompter Side.

the rule, the paucity made the merriment, for the fair trio, determined not to be deprived of their dance, made interest with the least languid of the ensigns, and got up a quadrille; gentlemen in dark overalls acting their natural characters, and those in white condescending to bestow their delicate fists upon their devoted swains. The party was kept up "with great spirit," as announced in 'The Examiner,' until two o'clock, when the exertions of the dancers were rewarded by an elegant and sumptuous *souper*, &c. &c.

I was not sorry when our preparations for the march to Merat were concluded. My own arrangements were speedily accomplished; consisting simply in the purchase of tents, the engaging of servants, the laying in of stock, and the provision of camels and carriage for the transportation of my baggage.

On the 22d of January, our troop marched out of Cawnpore, having taken up the guns and horses which had been left for us by our relieving troop. For many miles after quitting Cawnpore, the road is "flat, stale, and unprofitable," devoid of scenic beauty, or other local interest than the abundance of game to be found on all sides. Until we get upon more pleasing ground, then, I will venture to draw a slight sketch of our little camp, and the

modus operandi observed in its locomotion from place to place. A troop of Horse Artillery is in strength one hundred men, and is officered by a captain commanding, and three subalterns. Its battery consists of six guns, each drawn by six horses; four nine-pounders upon the flanks, and two twenty-four-pounder, or five-and-a-half inch, howitzers in the centre;* to each of these guns is attached an ammunition-waggon with four horses, and in rear of these are the spare horses, harnessed and mounted, ready to supply the place of any which may chance to be disabled.

For the accommodation of our force, including the hospital and commissariat departments, together with the complement of officers, about thirty tents are necessary, which constitute a pretty extensive town of canvas. The plan of encampment may be interesting to the uninitiated. The tents of the officers are pitched in a right line, in the centre of which, a little in advance, are those of the command-

* These effective pieces of ordnance have been superseded by six-pounders and twelve-pounder howitzers, pursuant to an order issued during the administration of Lord William Bentinck, while his lordship was exercising the joint functions of Governor-general and Commander-in-chief. By this edict, the most powerful arm of our service has been crippled and shorn of its strength: the present guns are certainly lighter than the former, and may possibly wear out a less number of horses in the course of the year, besides being equally well adapted to the purposes of parade; but with our weight we lost our might, and, in service, should hardly be up to the terrible execution wrought in former days: this is shewn in our practice.

ing officer. At right angles to the extremities of this line, and forming the opposite sides of a quadrangle, are the tents for the accommodation of the men. The fourth side of the figure is made up of the guns and waggons, the former unlimbered, and forming a battery outwards. In the centre of this quadrangle, the horses are picketted, and the smiths, carpenters, farriers, saddlers, and other workmen, have their stations. Elephants, camels, and bullocks, share in the labour of transporting this little town from place to place.

About two hours after midnight, the camp is disturbed by the knocking and rattling of tent-pegs in all directions; for at this hour the operation of striking commences, and a good hour before the earliest peep of dawn, the trumpeters on each side of the camp send forth a brazen blast "turn out the whole!" Then comes our ancient friend, the worthy Boláki Dass, with clean boots and a *chillaumchi* (brass-basin) of water, followed by the equally estimable Buxoo, with the wonted cup of coffee.* Now let the awakened master dress

* Our art of coffee-making in India is infinitely more to the purpose than that which is in vogue among the English at home: the chief secret lies in roasting the berry immediately before it is required for use, whereby it will be found to possess its aroma in far greater fulness than when it has been kept to "waste its fragrance on the desert air," in a damp store-room.

and appoint himself, or rather suffer himself to be dressed and appointed, with more of expedition than is his languid nature in cantonments, for in a short half-hour after the first summons, "the shrill-tongued messenger of war" will sound the stirring call of "boots and saddles!" intimating that he who is on duty must speedily throw his booted leg over his saddle; especially the subaltern on duty must be smartly mounted and early present on the mustering-ground, and carefully inspect, as well as partial darkness will admit, the tracing and condition of the mounted troop; this done, if the captain be not present, the subaltern on duty, nothing loath, shall, in becoming order and with due address, put the harnessed force in motion.

Verily, it is a brave and gallant sight to see the goodly line, "all furnished, all in arms, all plum'd like estridges," winding in glittering succession through the rocky pass, or spreading its warlike front over the green-sward carpets of the plain; and those who do behold shall hardly fail of praise and admiration in this host of able-bodied men and noble steeds, all

> "As full of spirit as the month of May,
> And gorgeous as the sun at Midsummer;"

their helmets nodding in the morning sun, and

scarlet crests of horse-hair waving in the wind. Faith, had I not forsworn the mad delusion, I would indite heroic odes of golden eulogy, world without end, to speak my boundless pleasure in the scene!

The length of the march varies from eight to double that number of miles, according to the facilities afforded by the country for commissariat supplies. At the villages where these are provided, the troop encamps, it being customary to pass through and pitch tents on the further side of the place. Each officer has usually one of his tents sent forward over-night, to be in readiness for his reception; so that he may, immediately upon arrival, find shelter from the sun, and refresh himself with a bath. The next consideration, after the duties of the toilet, is the breakfast; for a march through the bracing atmosphere of a January morning, in the Upper Provinces, will seldom fail to bestow an appetite.

On the morning of the fifth day's march, while we had yet about six miles of road between us and our new encampment, we beheld the approach of a *toofán*, or hurricane. The morning was bitterly cold, and the heavens were shut in all around with masses of inky clouds, which threatened to

deluge us with their floods: every moment it grew blacker, until our road was scarcely discernible, and suddenly a wild commotion seemed to be whirling the vapours about in all directions, over our heads. Then burst upon our cavalcade a dire tornado, which in fitful gusts threatened to lay us prostrate on the ground; the stately palm-trees bowed their proud heads to the earth, the humble plantain and the vine were strewed in fragments on the wilderness; the vivid lightnings hissed across the plain, and scorched the vegetation; hoarse rattling thunders rent the startled sky, and shook from the black revolving clouds a storm of hail, almost as terrible as that which is described by Scripture to have fallen upon the Egyptians, for it literally "smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field."

The wind drove upon us in fearful blasts, which caused the hailstones to inflict bruises almost insufferable. Our faces were cut, and our hands were so benumbed, that it was with difficulty we could retain command of our chargers. It was little short of marvellous that none of us were deprived of our sight, for I do not exaggerate when I say, that many of the hailstones which fell among us were as large as pigeons' eggs.

The horses, maddened by the severity of the blows which they received, became almost ungovernable:—*we* considered that they would have been quite so to any but Horse Artillerymen—so many of them broke their traces by kicking and plunging, that we found it quite impracticable to put the troop into a trot, a measure by which we had hoped to keep the horses together. Finding ourselves unable to accelerate the movements of the troop, we drew them up on one side of the road, and untraced the horses from the guns, giving the troopers orders to make the best of their way to the partial cover offered by a patch of mango trees, about a quarter of a mile distant from the road. Here we found some little shelter in the trees, but every leaf and every tender branch had been stript off from them.

Such a wild and desolate sight I have seldom witnessed: the surface of the ground, as far as the eye could reach, was buried three or four inches deep in fallen ice. Several of the men had been thrown by their horses, and the affrighted creatures were galloping to and fro, and floundering in the hailstones, unable to keep their footing. With the utmost exertions, we did not reach camp until past noon, for the fury of the storm was succeeded by

a change of wind, and a heavy fall of rain, which rendered the roads almost impracticable. We pitched without the village of Merám-ki-Serai.

I had just concluded a hearty breakfast, and was throwing my wearied limbs over a corner of the table, to enjoy a comfortable *chillaum,** when the order book was thrust into my hand, bearing instructions to the following effect:—"Two funeral parties of the usual strength will parade at 8 o'clock, P.M., under the officer on duty, for the purpose of conveying the mortal remains of gunners —— and ——, to the place of interment," &c. &c. I had been indulging a most comfortable belief that I had already received my share of evil for the twenty-four hours *in prospectu,* feeling that more than sufficient for that day was the evil thereof, when all my anticipations of repose were put to flight by this unwelcome call upon my further services. The duty was a melancholy one, but it was not the first time I had been called upon to perform the office.

At the hour appointed, having taken up the corpses, we were proceeding to the spot selected

* The *chillaum* is the cup of the *hookka,* which holds the tobacco, and the word is used to signify *a pipe* of tobacco. Thus: "*Chillaum peügé?*" "Will you smoke (literally, *drink*) a pipe of tobacco from the *hookka?*"

for interment, when it became evident that the afternoon was closing in with weather which might prove little better than that which we had experienced in the morning. We slightly accelerated our movements, lest the coming storm should interrupt us in the ceremony, and I had just come to that part of the service where preparation is made for committing the body to the grave, when a vivid flash of lightning almost blinded me. I was compelled to pause an instant to recover my sight, and had recommenced, "in the midst of life we are in death;" at that moment my voice was suddenly quenched by a fearful crash of thunder, which seemed to fall in the very midst of us, and a rushing breeze swept down, bearing a deluge of water which drenched us through, and partially filled up the grave; moreover, my prayer-book was so completely saturated, that I almost despaired of being able to conclude the ceremony. The grave was ultimately cleared sufficiently for our purpose, and the remainder of the rite of burial was decently performed, after which we covered the bodies with a thick layer of thorny bushes, to prevent their being disinterred by the jackals, or grave-diggers, as they are called among the European soldiers.

I do not remember upon any occasion to have taken part in a more imposing scene: the comrades of the deceased had attended in great numbers, for they were greatly beloved in the troop; there was not one among the many who failed to pay an honourable tribute of sorrow and esteem in the presence of the dead, nor did the solemnity of the ceremony suffer diminution in the grandeur of the storm which accompanied it.

On the evening of this comparatively eventful day, we had just drawn our chairs around our pic-nic board, when our party was increased by the arrival of two officers travelling *dák* to the east-ward. While passing our camp, their olfactory organs had been so kindly greeted by such inviting odours from our culinary preparations, that, having fasted throughout the day, they were unable to withstand the persuasive appeal; they therefore sought our mess-tent, and sent in their cards.

"*Cornhill Tumble-down Sahib, our Captáun Wretched Breeches Sahib,*" exclaimed the orderly *sipáhi*, laying the cards with great gravity upon the table with one hand, as he performed a military salute with the other. A simultaneous burst of laughter from the whole party overwhelmed the poor fellow with confusion and dismay, at the

affront thus put upon his military dignity; he being altogether unconscious of the cause which had so irresistibly excited our risible propensities.

"Here, bring them to me, Bahádoor Singh," said our little commanding officer; "let us see who these worn-out way-farers may be. Ah! I thought as much, Colonel Zachary Pott Templeton, and Captain Richard Bridges: shew them to my tent, where they may dress, and then request them to walk in and take dinner with us." The *sipáhi* left the tent to execute his orders, quite crest-fallen and with a clouded brow; for a native cannot brook a laugh from his superiors.

"This is a coincidence," continued our chief; "here are the two most notorious long-bows in the country. You have heard of them, surely? Why, Templeton has been raised to the dignity of master of the craft; so rich is his genius for hyperbole and embellishment. Oh! we shall have glorious sport in spreading our nets for his whales; and, faith! it requires no great skill to allure them from his preserves: he has a plentiful stock, and the beauty of the thing is, that the same fish may be caught half-a-dozen times, though scarcely recognisable in a new skin of very different-coloured scales. As for Bridges, nothing is too enormous

for his capacity; the greater the undertaking, with so much the more determination and perseverance will he set to work upon it; the more sceptical his auditors, the greater labour will he use to convince them: he believes every word of his stories himself, and so —— "

Here the entrance of the visitors cut short the exposition of their powers. The usual salutations and introductions passed, and the hungry travellers acquitted themselves bravely upon our viands.

"This is excellent claret," said Templeton; "almost as good as that I import myself, and this *chutni* is nearly equal to my father's. By-the-bye, Garlic, you are a bit of an epicure, and know the history of these things; are you aware that my father, who entered the service in 1762, was the original inventor of *chutni?* It's a fact, upon my honour."

"But, my dear fellow, surely you're mistaken," returned Garlic. "Why Abul Fazil mentions, in 1573, that the Emperor Akbur, being indisposed, did very greatly alarm his physicians and aggravate his disease, by partaking inordinately of *chutni;* and then follows a long description of the sauce, a list of the ingredients of which it was composed, and a voluminous recipe for its concoction."

"Oh! yes, yes; that's all very true; I'm perfectly aware of the circumstance you refer to, my dear Garlic; but it has been ascertained that it is not at all the same kind of thing. The objection was started by one of my father's friends, and so he wrote a pamphlet to demonstrate the difference which marked the two inventions; in fact, he called his sauce by the name of *chutni,* after Abul Fazil's. Now, my dear fellow, do let me set you right; the two condiments have not the least resemblance; why, Abul Fazil's is an intoxicating compound. I made some last year, and a monkey of mine got hold of the bottle, and made himself as drunk as a fiddler upon it."

"Ay, ay, Pemberton," said Bridges; "but that's no proof that it's intoxicating; monkies get drunk upon anything, almost. I gave your Jocko some coffee the other day, and it so inebriated the little rascal, that he went staggering about the compound, and insulting all the ducks and hens, till a general rise took place among the champions of the farm-yard, and he was ejected neck-and-crop from their society."

"Ah! master Jocko is a character," replied Templeton; "his sagacity and cunning are beyond all credence; his knowing is not confined to the

mere vulgar instinct of the brute creation. I have had him many years, and am fully persuaded that he has more than a smattering of many useful sciences. The circumstances under which I took him prisoner from his native wilds, displayed most evidently an intuitive knowledge of the medicinal virtues of herbs, and of the art of preparing and applying them. I must give you an account of his capture; it's really an interesting story, and worth recording. I have often thought of sending a statement of the facts to the Asiatic Society.

"Some years since, I was marching through Rajhmahal, and in the evening, having nothing better to do, I wandered out with my gun over my shoulder, and in a mango *tōp* I wantonly shot at an impertinent little monkey, who was making faces at me from the bough of a tree. Although he was plainly damaged, he did not fall; but skulked off pretty briskly, and I thought no more of him. Well, gentlemen, it so happened that the next morning I walked through the same *tōp*, and observing something red up one of the trees, I called immediately for my gun, expecting to make a rare and valuable addition to my collection of Natural History, which was then by far the finest in India."

"*Nota bene*," said Garlic aside; "Templeton never in his life collected anything but thumping improbabilities and overdrawn embellishments. The present *rara avis* (I have been favoured with fifty varieties of it) is a fair specimen of his museum."

"I couldn't exactly make out what sort of an animal it was," continued Templeton, after eyeing the bye-play rather suspiciously, "but I shot at it, and down came the grinning young sinner that I had shot at the day before, plump on the ground before me; the very same monkey, gentlemen; and, lo and behold! strange as it may appear, it's a truth, he had a piece of red *kurwar* (coarse cloth) tied over his rump. Ah! you may smile; but upon my veracity, gentlemen, it's no more than the fact; and, stay a minute, that's not all: curiosity induced me to untie the young rascal's cloth, and, by the prophet! there was a *nime* poultice applied to the small-shot wound. Ay! gentlemen, on the word of a soldier, just as good a *nime* poultice as ever was made by human hands. I even picked out some of the shot, in order that there should be no mistake about it, and truly it was all correct, No. 6, the very shot that I had been shooting with the day before, and No. 4, with which I had just brought him down."

"Well, that's an uncommon good story, Templeton," said Bridges; "but might not the monkey have belonged to some native, who had perchance learnt the art of making a *nime* poultice?"

"Out of the question, my dear fellow; utterly impossible; deuce a house or hut was there within twelve miles of the place. No, there's no way of misunderstanding the thing; I am ready, as Juvenal says, *vitum impendere vero,* to stake my life upon the truth of it; that monkey plucked the *nime* leaves, and boiled the poultice himself: there's not a doubt of it."

"Yes; but, Templeton," exclaimed our little commander, "not a house or hut within twelve miles! why, five minutes since, you said you were marching through Rajhmahal."

"Of course, certainly, most undoubtedly, it was so; we marched through Rajhmahal early in the morning, and encamped twelve miles beyond it, in a desolate plain, without a hut."

"Altogether," added Garlic, "a most convincing proof that monkies understand the sciences of surgery, medicine, chemistry, botany, and the culinary art."

"Most undoubtedly, to a certain extent."

"No, no, Tumble-down, my good fellow," re-

plied Garlic: "don't be angry, but really it's a little too rich; come now, you're hoaxing us, old boy; just cut a bit off, so that we may be able to swallow it; now do hark back, and hunt over your scent again; 'pon my honour, I think you were a little at fault somewhere."

"Upon my veracity, Garlic, I can assure you that I have scarcely done justice to the story; I have purposely kept the colouring as subdued as possible, lest you might think me inclined to exaggerate. Why, if I were to tell you it all just as it occurred, you would scarcely credit me; but by my troth, man, every word that I have told you is as true as gold."

"And you really saw it yourself?"

"Saw it! Garlic? most undoubtedly I saw it."

"But would you have believed the story if you had merely heard it; unless you had seen it with those green swivel eyes of yours? Eh, old boy? come now."

"Why, n—o; it's undoubtedly a strange occurrence,—most extraordinary: I hardly think I should have given credit to it unless I had seen it."

"Then you will excuse me, my dear fellow; as I have not seen it, you know, you won't expect me to believe it quite."

"But, Garlic," said Bridges, "you must make allowances; we all know that Templeton loves to embellish his yarns a little; and though his anecdote is a true one at bottom, he tells it over and over again, till it becomes hardly recognisable, while all the time he believes he is adhering to the very letter of the original. However, that these monkies are most extraordinary animals, there can be no doubt. Why, when I was stationed at Dinapore, my sirdar-bearer had one that used to play *puchisi** with him, and it was certainly not a little amusing to see the fellow counting his points on his fingers, and putting his winnings into a small bag which he wore round his neck for the purpose. I asked Bukhtawa, the man he belonged to, if he really understood the game, and he assured me that he was one of the best players in the bazaar; he even offered to back him against any *puchisi-walla* in the station for a gold mohur. This, I can assure you, is a fact, because I speak from my own positive knowledge; I was so interested in the

* A favourite game among the natives of India, played upon a chequered ground, with the small shells called cowries. So madly infatuated are they with this game, that a man will frequently gamble away his month's pay at a sitting. At Merat, while I was there, an officer's servant, having lost his all, staked his little finger against an eight-anna piece, value about ten-pence; the pledge was accepted, won, and payment exacted by his antagonist.

circumstance, that I learnt the game on purpose to play with him, and he used to beat me out-and-out."

"Well, upon my honour," said Templeton, "that beats my story out-and-out, at all events; if monkies can play at *puchisi*, why, they may easily be taught to read and write. I shall put Jocko under a *moonshi* forthwith, and have him educated as an accountant: he'll save me thirty rupees a month."

"Now, Templeton, don't be sceptical, or I shall be tempted to send down to Mhow and offer Bukhtawa a handsome price for Jooari* (he was christened so on account of his gambling), although the man, before he left my service, refused repeatedly to take a thousand rupees for him."

"Well, Bridges, it's all very well, but really I feel a little inclined to give you Garlic's knock-down argument; 'did you see it?' &c. But come, my good fellow, we must be off, or we shall have demurrage charged against us in the *dák* office."

As their palkis were heard to move off, a burst of laughter followed them, as hearty as that which had greeted their arrival.

"How thoroughly inexplicable!" cried Garlic; "that system of lying is certainly a disease; how

* *Jooari*, a gamester: Hindostani.

it grows upon those two! Bridges could discern the extravagance of Templeton's story, and yet he could not see the utter impossibility of his own. It's very absurd—for the man's no fool: in other matters, he has as much good sense as his neighbours; but on this one point he is beyond all toleration, and he is as obstinate as he is foolish."

"Very true," said another; "but he believes every word he utters; he has told his stories so frequently, enlarging upon them gradually and imperceptibly to himself, that at last he puts forth the grossest impossibilities, which nobody can credit, and he earns himself the stigma of being a wilful liar. Deville would find a bump for it."

The discussion was here interrupted by Bahádoor Singh, the *sipáhi*, who came to signify to our commanding officer his wish to obtain his discharge. He was inclined to be sulky, and it was some time before his gall would give way. Explanation did no good, so Garlic took him in hand.

"Now, Bahádoor Singh, you should feel a pleasure in affording amusement to your officers; but I will try and instruct you in English pronunciation, and then you will be less likely to be laughed at in future; come now, try the name over again; Colonel Templeton."

"*Han, khodáwund, golam summujte;* Connell—Tumble-down."

"No, no, my son; Templeton, Templeton; Colonel Templeton."

"*Han, sahib;* Connell—Tremble-Tom."

"Not exactly, my good man; Colonel Templeton."

"Connell Treble-turn."

"No, try again; Colonel Templeton."

"*Uchha, gurreebpurwan, ap bolta hi, lehkin golam to bolna ne sukhta.*" (It's true, protector-of-the-poor, your honour speaks the word, but your slave has it not upon his tongue.)

"Never mind that, Bahádoor Singh; it should be a soldier's pride to conquer all difficulties; come, make another trial; now, Colonel Templeton."

"*Such, khodáwund, ab hue;* Connell Tamper-town."

"Well, that's very near the mark; we shall get on, I see. Once more; Colonel Tem-ple-ton."

"Connell Tom-fool-Dan."

"Very good; you'll soon catch it; Colonel Templeton."

"Connell Triple-tongue."

"Again; Colonel Templeton."

"*Uchha,* Connell Temple-done."

"Colonel Templeton."

"Connell Trampled-on."

"Gently, gently, my good fellow, you get over the ground a little too fast; now then, once again; Colonel Temple-ton."

"O! Connell Temper-torn."

"Ay, now you've hit it to a T," replied Garlic; come to me again to-morrow evening, and we will go through Captain Rich-in Breeches.

The orderly, with something like restored good-humour, made his salute, and retired; and so literally did he receive his orders, that, on the following evening, he made his appearance for a second lesson in pronunciation.

I have somewhere read, in Tennant or Rennell, I think, that the district of Cawnpore is less infested by thieves and plunderers than any other throughout Bengal. If this be really the case, I can only say, that all the rogues who might complete the usual average lie round the borders of it; for at Minpoori, a large walled town, the modern capital of the district of Etta͠ia, lying upon the borders of the Cawnpore division, we were so annoyed with *choars* and thieves of all sorts, that besides our camp-sentries, we were compelled to employ at least thirty watchmen around our camp;

men for whose honesty the *jemmadar*, or chief village functionary, was responsible. The best security for the efficiency of these men is, that they should themselves be thieves; for, in that case, the trifle paid for their services purchases their forbearance, and also their influence with their brother marauders.

Notwithstanding the little army of these *tchokedars* picketed around our camp, some of the rascals from without managed to creep through their line, and walk off with various small articles of our property. So subtle are they, that they elude all watch, and generally escape with property from within the very grasp of the owner; and it seems to be their peculiar delight to display their skill by carrying off that which is considered most secure, and by scattering the unprofitable part of their booty over the ground which should be most carefully guarded. Their admittance to the tent is generally gained by slitting up the canvas, and thus having made a door for themselves, they pass to and fro, appearing and disappearing like ghosts.

Innumerable are the anecdotes to be heard and read throughout India, concerning the skilful depredations of these plunderers. One man has to

tell of a watch taken from beneath his pillow while he was sleeping, and while servants were watching without the tent, and others lying on the ground within it. Another relates that his iron-bound chest, which was chained and padlocked to the pole of the tent, has been conveyed away as if by magic from its place, and having been rifled of its treasures, is strewed in fragments over the beat occupied by his sentries, yet the agents have not been discovered. Another has had his finest pair of sheets stolen from his bed while he was sleeping between them: this is by no means an uncommon feat performed by these expert light-fingered gentry, and the process is very ingenious; it cannot, however, be performed in total darkness, which adds greatly to the risk of detection, and therefore instances of this sort of theft are not so frequent as they otherwise would be: for, impracticable as it at first appears, the thing is by no means difficult of accomplishment.

It is necessary to premise, that in India people do not usually sleep with a burden of bed-clothes over them as is the custom in Old England; owing to the overpowering heat of the climate, a single sheet is all that is requisite, except during the cold season. Another point which I should

also mention is, that upon the march, where musquito-curtains are seldom used, the traveller becomes so well accustomed to the tickling of flies and other insects, that he will not be easily disturbed by a slight touch of the kind, any further than to alter his position, or, while still sleeping, to turn the offended part undermost. The upper sheet it requires only lightness of hand to remove; the theft of the under one is thus executed.

The operator, having satisfied himself that the occupant of the bed is sleeping soundly, and not slumbering merely, gently takes one of the upper corners of the sheet in one hand, while with a feather in the other, he very delicately tickles the opposite arm or shoulder of the sleeper, until the irritation induces him to turn further towards the other side of the bed; but here the body cannot rest, for the bed being somewhat hollow in the centre, it gradually sinks back into its old position, and care is taken by the thief to draw the sheet very softly along with the person; and this operation being a few times repeated, disengages the coveted cloth from beneath the insensible owner.

An equally clever trick was played upon me at

Minpoori, on the evening of our march thither; so much was I struck with the ingenuity of the thief, that on the following morning I sent a *tom-tom-walla* (crier) into the bazaar, offering him indemnity, and a handsome salary, if he would enter my service as a *tchokedar*; but the rascal was evidently suspicious of my integrity, for he would not give himself up. The occurrence was in this wise.

I was sitting, after dinner had been removed, with a brother officer, and, both of us being not a little fatigued with a long day's shooting, our conversation had declined into a sleepy sort of grumble, interrupted only by the continued rattle of our two *hookkas*, as we puffed away at the fragrant pipes. I had just called for, and had been supplied with, a fresh *chillaum*, when I found the tobacco burning and flaring as if the *surpoose*, or cover, had been removed; and turning, I found this was really the case. Quite unsuspicious of the cause, I called again and again for my *hookka-burdar*, or pipe-bearer, and receiving no answer from him, I went outside, and found him lying on the ground with the other servants fast asleep. This somewhat surprised me, as I had so lately been waited upon: I enquired why he had given me a *chillaum*

without the *surpoose*, and the man then denied the fact.

"Why, did you not bring me a fresh *chillaum* scarcely five minutes since? Get up, you lazy slave, and bring the *surpoose* immediately."

"Sir, sir," cried the old man, "behold! my turban and waist-belt are gone; surely a thief has done this! Half-an-hour since, having served your pipe, I took off these things, lest I should soil them, and lay down to rest until you should call again. Now, without doubt, a *choar* has carried them off."

The manner of the theft was evident. I had been sitting with my back to the entrance of the tent, and the *hookka* being behind me, I could not see the man who attended in reply to my summons; but my friend, who sat opposite to me, remarked that a taller and younger man than usual, habited in my livery—the missing turban and waist-belt—had brought in the new *chillaum*; he did not mention the circumstance at the moment, concluding that I had changed my servant. We could only suppose, therefore, that the man, while prowling about, had been attracted by the glittering silver *surpoose*, and had hit upon the expedient of waiting upon me as my *hookka-burdar*, while

my own servant was sleeping; and thus he had carried off both the silver and the clothing, the latter for the sake of the gold-lace with which it was trimmed.

Before retiring to rest, every possible precaution was taken for the security of the camp; besides the usual number of sentries, a night-picket was ordered to patrol the camp at irregular intervals, and particular instructions were given to the watchmen touching their duty; all our moveable property was removed from the interior of our tents, and piled in a heap upon the open space before the commanding officer's tent; over them a couple of sentries were posted. It was a moonlight night, as bright almost as noon-day, and had our measures for security been taken with less care, we could hardly have anticipated any mischief, as long as the moon should continue above the horizon; so that we went to rest in perfect confidence of our safety, notwithstanding the oft-repeated cautions of our servants, and those who knew the character of the robbers. Before I went to bed, I lighted a lamp, and drew it up to the roof of the tent as a further precaution.

About midnight, I was aroused from sleep with cries of "*choar! choar!*" thief! thief! in a distant

part of the camp. The lamp was no longer burning, and but a partial reflection of light from without glimmered through the tent. I was about to start from my bed, for the purpose of joining in the chase, when I observed a tall white figure, as thin as a whipping-post, moving quietly to and fro just opposite to the foot of my bed. I hastily seized a pistol from beneath my pillow,—half expecting to find that it had been stolen,—and cocking it, demanded who was in the tent. I received no answer, but the figure sunk upon the ground as if with the intention of creeping under the canvas: I presented my pistol and again asked who was moving. Still no answer;—I was upon the point of jumping out of bed, when I recollected the *kuttars* and dangerous knives which these thieves always carry about them, and not being anxious to handle an armed robber in the dark, I once more spoke aloud, threatening to fire if the figure did not reply to me. I made use of both English and Hindostani, lest I should do any innocent person an injury; but being still unanswered, I determined to fire at once: just then the figure again rose to its extreme height, and commenced rubbing at the canvas, as if cutting it, or detaching something from it. I therefore hesitated no longer: "Whether

you understand me or not," said I, "look out for your legs;" and pulling the trigger, I put a ball clean through the lower part of the object before me.

A most pitiable yell succeeded the discharge of the pistol, and sorely was I dismayed indeed, when I found that I had shot my favourite dog Belle, a fine English lurcher, through the loins; she died almost immediately. Contrary to custom and my express orders, she had been let loose for the protection of the tent, and had been attracted to the place where I shot her, by a piece of flesh which the servants had suspended above her reach upon the opposite side of the canvas. Poor Belle! she licked the hand that destroyed her, as she drew her last breath: she was a general favourite, and her funeral, which took place the next morning, was numerously attended.

Instances of theft such as have been stated above are so frequently recurring, that, dexterous as are the perpetrators, it is impossible they should be able to perform such very astonishing feats as are daily reported of them, unless with the assistance, or at least the connivance, of the servants about the property. This they undoubtedly obtain, for never were there in all the world such pilfering,

plundering rascals as all the lower classes of natives.

The *choars* form a separate denomination of thieves from the *dukhaits, thugs,* &c. of whom mention will be found in another part of the present narrative: those now under discussion are peculiarly addicted to sleight-of-hand tricks and cunning; they wear no clothing while engaged in the act, in order that they may not be laid hold of; and for this purpose also they besmear their bodies with oil and shave the hair from their heads; so that, if seized, the culprit slips through the hands of the captor like an eel, and being gifted with the speed of the deer and the cunning of the fox, pursuit will generally be found fruitless. A sharp knife is carried by most of them, but it is not frequently used; indeed, only in cases of great emergency, or where their freedom may depend upon it. Nearly the whole tribe are also provided with a much more awkward and dangerous weapon,—a blade attached to the elbow in such fashion, that it will lie flat upon the arm while the limb remains extended by the side; but, the arm being bent, the weapon protrudes from the elbow backwards, so that the owner may unexpectedly stab any pursuer who closes upon

him. This instrument is held in great dread by those peaceable natives, who are to be found among the domestics of Europeans in India.

A still more nefarious sort of depredation is practised by the natives at this town, and at other places along the road. In the hope of obtaining a horse's skin, which they can sell in the Cawnpore market for one rupee, they will wantonly poison the finest animals, without regard to their value or their blood. Strict attention is necessary to keep all strangers from the neighbourhood of the horses, or otherwise there will be little hope for the creatures' preservation. The agents employed in this are as cunning, and have as many ingenious contrivances for administering the drug, as the *choars* display in their peculiar province. For many years the method of poisoning the horses remained a mystery, and it was generally supposed that the edges of the wells or tanks were besmeared with some poisonous matter, in expectation that one horse out of the many might happen to partake of it. It was, however, remarked that the fattest and sleekest horses invariably fell victims to this insidious evil, and at last the secret was discovered; it proved to be administered in the form of a small pill cast into the horse's hay while feeding.

In despite of our best efforts, three of our troop-horses were destroyed in this manner, before we had marche dfifty miles from Cawnpore; but, as the strictest measures were taken for preventing all strangers from approaching the horses, it became evident that the drug must have been thrown into the grass before it was brought into camp: possibly by some insinuating villager who would find an opportunity while standing to talk with the grass-cutters. We, however, balked the rascals of their prizes by cutting the hides to pieces, so as to render them useless; and this plan has since been very generally adopted, in consequence of which the system is now fast declining. The moment travellers are observed to display an over-security, they are sure to suffer, more particularly those who are arriving from the lower provinces, for the fellows naturally suppose them to be ignorant of the mischief. Cawnpore is the largest leather mart throughout all India: hence the inducement held out to these rascals to practise their infamous trade.

I have said there was little to interest a traveller upon the road from Cawnpore to Merat: the distance is two hundred and seventy-eight miles by the route we pursued, and yet I have nothing

worthy of record touching any of the places; indeed, all that I could offer would be the names of the towns and villages through which we marched, and a note of the nature of the soil, the game, &c.; for, besides the evil already complained of, we suffered a thorough dearth of incident.

From Minpoori we took our road through Allighur, Boolindshahir, and Haupper, at which last-mentioned place the Company have an extensive stud for the supply of horses to the Horse Artillery and Cavalry corps. Hence a couple of easy marches will bring us to the military cantonment of Merat, where for the present we make sojourn.

CHAPTER XIV.

MERAT.

The city of Merat (it is called a city by the natives, though it is now scarcely worthy of the title) is situated in latitude 28° 59′ N., and longitude 77° 38′ E. It was in by-gone days a place of considerable importance among the Hindus, its history being well known as far back as the commencement of the eleventh century. It is said to have been built and strongly fortified about that time, by one of the Patan kings, and to have undergone many reverses, until the year 1400, when it was captured and sacked by Timour. The town is said to have made a vigorous resistance, in punishment of which, Timour burnt it to the ground. It was shabbily rebuilt, and since that time has continued a place of small note in history. The streets are narrow and dirty, and the walls contain no one object, that I am aware of, which could interest the traveller.

The cantonment stands about two miles to the northward of the city, and if there be little of scenic beauty to claim the admiration of a visitor, there is at least right excellent good-cheer and open hospitality, which cannot fail to win his good opinion. The station is divided into two parts, by a small stream called the *Kalli Nuddi,* or black brook, over which are thrown two handsome bridges, one built by the Company, the other by the Begum Sumroo. This little stream, which cuts the station in two, appears to divide the society also; for between the residents upon the opposite banks, there is not that cordial intercourse which is to be found among the members of either party respectively. I speak generally: undoubtedly there are many exceptions to the rule.

Upon the north-west bank of the stream are lines of barracks for the accommodation of a brigade of Horse Artillery, an European Cavalry corps, and a regiment of European Infantry, upon the right, left, and centre respectively. These lines are separate from each other, being divided by a distance of several hundred yards: in front, a splendid plain of two square miles affords a magnificent parade-ground for the troops, with ample space for the manœuvres of Horse Artillery, and

field-battery practice. Upon the extreme right is the heavy battery, consisting of two twenty-four-pounders, two eighteens, a ten-inch howitzer, two eight-inch ditto, and a battery of mortars. The barracks overlook this plain, and about them stand the stables, hospitals, riding-schools, canteens, and other military offices. In rear of the barracks, and in a continued line, three deep, are the bungalows of the officers, each situated in the centre of its own little garden, or compound, which is about a hundred yards square.

The barracks for the accommodation of the European Infantry corps are handsome and very comfortable; being laid out in separate bungalows, consisting of one large and lofty room, surrounded by a spacious enclosed verandah, which, being partitioned off in places, furnishes the non-commissioned officers and married men with private apartments: around these there is again an outer verandah, which shelters them from the direct rays of the sun, and affords a convenient lounge to the men. These barracks have a great advantage over the old plan of building; they enjoy a free current of air through the interstices; the rooms are much more quiet and private, and the men are

not thrown together in such a heterogeneous mass, as is the case elsewhere.

The opposite side of the "black stream" is occupied by three regiments of Native Infantry, and one of Native Cavalry: these have no barracks, but exist in dirty mud huts, huddled together by regiments. The officers' bungalows are for the most part inferior to those upon the *white* side of the stream, and are scattered about with less attention to regularity and neatness. Here, too, the roads are bad, and the bed of the stream being very dry during the greater part of the year, has an offensive appearance.

Between the cantonment and the city, is a handsome house belonging to the Begum Sumroo, an old lady of whom some little account will be given in the sequel. Upon the estate in question, is a large mansion for her own accommodation, and several bungalows for her officers. Her territory lies about thirteen miles N.W. from Merat; but she usually visits the station during September and October, when she is accompanied by her court, and a rag-tag-and-bob-tail crew, which her commander in chief denominates her body guard. When in Merat, she is usually to be seen with her

whole suite upon the public promenade during the cool of the evening, being carried to and fro in a *ton-jaun*, or species of garden-chair, borne upon the shoulders of bearers, after the fashion of a palki.

Not far from this estate of the Begum's, are the ice-pits, for the manufacture of ice during the cold season, and for its preservation during the intolerable summer. These should be visited by the traveller, if he be there while the works are in operation; there is some information and no little amusement to be gleaned, if the process is a novelty.

About the beginning, or the middle, of December, or as the weather may suggest, the whole of the ground devoted to this purpose is strewed with sugar-cane leaf, straw, or any other available substance, which readily radiates caloric; upon this are placed a very great number of shallow earthern pans, made porous, by being loosely wrought and baked in a slow furnace: these are supplied with water to the depth of half-an-inch, which when frozen, will vary, according to the rapidity of the evaporation, from a quarter to the eighth of an inch in thickness. The sun is allowed to rise upon the pans, so as to loosen the ice from them, otherwise they must of necessity be broken before it can be disengaged; unless indeed they should be ex-

posed to the influence of artificial heat, which I have never seen practised; although it has possibly been done at Cawnpore, for Miss Roberts informs us that the ice in that station is removed "several times in the course of each night."

The works are carried on upon an extensive scale, lest our capricious frosts should leave us in the lurch. At Merat, in 1833, fifty camels were daily employed in bringing in sugar-cane leaf; two hundred and eighty *coolies*, or labourers, to strew the leaf and lay out the pans; and forty *bihistis*, or water-carriers, to fill the pans with water as long as the frosts lasted, or until a sufficient quantity had been laid in for the supply of the station. The expenses this year were, I must allow, greater than usual, through carelessness or mismanagement; ten lahks, or one hundred thousand pans were furnished to the establishment this year, at one pice each, rendering the outlay, for pans alone, equal to one thousand six hundred rupees, or about £150. About two thousand *maunds*, or one hundred and sixty thousand lbs. of ice are found adequate to supply the cantonment during the hottest months, that is, from April to the middle of October, allowing an average of one-tenth for waste in the pits.

These pits are constructed in the firmest soil available, and are lined throughout with thick layers of matting and reeds; at the bottom a well is cut, for the purpose of carrying off the waste, without which the increasing moisture would very quickly dissolve the whole mass. The ice thus accumulated is disposed of in shares, of which there are usually about forty, and each of these entitles the holder to sixteen pounds of ice daily, as long as it may last, at an average expense of something near £10. Before it is taken from the pit it is beaten into a solid mass, and it is then carried to its destination in a large basket thickly padded with cotton, within which it is enfolded closely in a coarse blanket.

It may readily be believed, that in a tropical climate, such a luxury is cheaply purchased at almost any price. What pangs of uncharitable envy must be excited in the ghosts of the first Englishmen who expired of liver-congestion in India, if they ever happen to get a peep at our tables spread with iced wines, iced water, iced creams, iced game, iced sherbet, iced butter, iced everything, under a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit! "Ah!" they would exclaim, "it is all the work of those two seven-league-booted Siamese-twin brothers, Intellect and Reform. When we were

ensigns, upon a thousand a-year, we were obliged to drink our claret half-mulled, and eat our bread with honey-butter; and now these lads, with only a couple of hundreds, are living like gods; but after all they are only cutting Promotion's throat;—their seniors will never die."

Merat church is one of the largest throughout India, though its appearance is neither handsome nor picturesque. It is neat and commodious, however, and affords sittings to three thousand persons. It was erected partly by a benefaction from government, and further by subscription of the residents. The Begum Sumroo, though by persuasion a Papist, with her usual liberality, gave a handsome donation towards the building.

There are other public buildings worthy of notice, among which may be mentioned the Station Theatre,—*the* theatre *par excellence;* for it is a fact that, at Merat, during the time of which I speak (1833), there were no less than five Thespic temples,—*the* Theatre, the Horse Artillery Theatre, the Dragoon Theatre, the Cameronian Theatre, and the Cameronian Band Theatre, all in operation, and all in debt. The latter four are small houses, belonging to the privates of the several regiments, each having its own *corps dramatique*.

The Station Drury is a handsome house, and very tastefully decorated, though a sad blunder has been committed in its construction; it was erected, through the stupidity of the native contracting builder, with its rear towards the public promenade; thus exposing, in a measure, the stage scaffolding and machinery, during the changes and counter-changes to which theatrical arrangements are naturally subject. Had not the design of the amateur architect been thus unfortunately reversed, the portico, which now stands hidden behind the body of the building, would have rendered the house an ornament to the cantonment; as it now exists, it is positively an eye-sore. The scenery is very beautiful, and got up in artist-like style; there is also an excellent wardrobe, and no dearth of dramatic talent, as may be more fully displayed hereafter.

In rear of the theatre is the Masonic Lodge, a structure which, in point of architecture and stability, does little credit to the craft. In external appearance, it is inelegant, and though completed as lately as 1834, it is falling to decay, owing to some roguery on the part of the contractor. The interior is spacious, and prettily ornamented, and

is excellently adapted to its purpose on account of its privacy, and in virtue of certain local advantages best known to the fraternity. The lodge-room is handsome and of bold proportions; and the refreshment hall is by no means an unsightly apartment: it is prettily designed, though badly executed. As it was originally built it was really a fine apartment, and the style of architecture was admirably suited to the purpose for which it is intended, but two of the arches having unfortunately given way, the plan of the roof has been altered, and thus the symmetry of the proportions has been destroyed. If report speak true, however, all defects in the building are happily covered by the conspicuous worth and generosity of the fraternity who own it.

Merat, being the head-quarters of the Horse Artillery, a brigade, consisting of four troops of the corps, is always quartered there. The officers' mess is known throughout India for its hospitality, and as the centre of all that is gay and glorious in the western provinces. The exterior of the mess-house is not handsome; but within are two very elegant rooms, large enough for the entertainment of the whole station; and though not so splendidly furnished as the Artillery mess-house at Dum Dum,

still the whole establishment is very superior to the generality of similar institutions in India. It is not this, however, which gives the mess its fame; it is the excellent good-cheer and hearty good-fellowship to be met with, even by a stranger, within its walls.

The officers of the corps have erected a magnificent racket-court in the vicinity of their lines; and here, as soon as the declining sun will permit, the officers assemble to display their skill, and turn over the gossip of the day, while they puff a cheroot and sip their *brandy-pani*. Many people deem the game too violent an exercise for so debilitating a climate, and undoubtedly it will prove injurious to those who over-exert themselves; moreover, it will certainly be dangerous to those who heedlessly indulge in quenching their thirst, or in exposing themselves to chills while heated. If, however, a man be blessed with a tolerably sound constitution, and will submit to take due caution, he will, I believe from experience, find no deleterious effects in the game. It is well to play in an entire suit of flannel, to abstain from drinking while hot, and immediately upon retiring from the court to be thoroughly rubbed down, or groomed, by a couple of slaves.

The dimensions of the court are one hundred and fifty feet by fifty, and the service-wall is fifty feet high. Shakspeare says, that if a man will play at bowls, he must expect rubbers; there is certainly some little chance that a man will get an occasional rubber at rackets, if his attention be withdrawn from the ball. In so large a court as the one in question, it requires a very smart stroke of the bat to send a ball horizontally (in which lies the peculiar skill of the game) from one end of the court to the other, so that, unless the eye be kept constantly upon the ball, the player may very possibly receive an awkward blow, quite sufficient to extract an eye or half-a-dozen teeth. I have more than once seen men floored, by a ball taking effect in the temple or behind the ear: however, if the player be watchful, there is little chance of injury, as the ball is seldom too swift to be avoided.

Soon after the arrival of our troop at Merat, the manager of the Theatre, having a long cast to fill, was beating up for assistance, and nearly all the minor parts being open, he was glad to accept the services of any promising debutant. The play proposed was the first part of Henry the Fourth. The leading characters were strongly cast, and in

the hands of amateurs, whose dramatic powers would have done no discredit to any stage; nothing was wanting but a roll of creditable small-fry for the secondary characters, and these were quickly found. A bumper house rewarded the exertions of the manager, and the play went off with great spirit; displaying more talent and real *jeu de théatre* than is usually to be found anywhere out of the profession. The actors were evidently doing their parts *con amore;* they performed to an audience of their own standing in society, and one which would reward their success with applause, and temper its criticisms with good humour. Who, that has ever strutted upon the stage, can forget the excitement of his first appearance, and, if in any measure successful, the intoxicating feelings which accompanied it? with what thrilling triumph and pride did he listen to the first ruff of applause with which his audience greeted him! what store of flattered vanity swells in his bosom, when again another *hit* brings down the thunders of the house! but then, in exact proportion to all this, is the confusion and dismay attendant upon a break-down.

In India, a man's pursuits and tastes, if he be not a nonentity, are pretty generally known to society at large; or, if he be moving to a quarter

where his name is still unknown, a rumour of his habits and character is sure to precede him; so that, upon his arrival at a station, he finds people prepared to tax his acquirements or enjoy his peculiarities, as if he had been previously among them. If he be said to excel in the fine arts, he is immediately waited upon by the Secretary of the Theatre, with a petition for his aid in favour of the scenic department of the stage.

"My dear Sir," exclaims the buskin in office, "are these paintings really your own production? they are exceedingly talented; but indeed it is a sin thus to hide your light under a bushel; your powers really deserve to be more publicly displayed; how exquisitely tender is that little spread of light thrown in between that cottage and the water, and how brilliantly that tree stands out from the middle-distance, and really the repose of the scene is very sweet! Dear me! your style is admirably adapted to scene-painting; did you never attempt it? you would positively be a second Stanfield. If you would like to try your hand at it, I dare say I could manage to get you a canvas prepared at the theatre; it would be a delightful thing to see such consummate art as this upon our boards; why, it would positively re-animate the public in favour

of our little Drury." And if the poor victim happen to conjoin histrionic powers with his skill in painting, he is overwhelmed with blandishments upon this tack also. "You have promised to fill a character in our next cast, I believe; you will then get a peep at our scenery; some of it is very beautifully executed by Captain ——; but there is none of it, I am sure, equal to what your brush is capable of producing; besides, the audience begin to weary of our old scenes, and one or two new ones from you would ensure us an overflowing house: this, it is true, we may anticipate in consequence of your performance, but how greatly would one or two scenes from your own hand enhance the éclât of your appearance."

Thus, between gratified vanity and a wish to oblige, the poor tool is persuaded to get into the buggy waiting at the door, and be driven off to the theatre, just to *look at* the scenery, and to be introduced to the manager, if he should happen to be at the house. The gods being unusually propitious, the manager *is*, by singular good luck, at the theatre, and an introduction is effected; then the "new prop" is polished off with another coating of varnish, to which the secretary's was a mere priming; afterwards, he is permitted to try his

hand upon a canvas which, by great good fortune, happens to have been prepared a month previously, but has remained untouched for want of an artist.

The office of an amateur stage-manager is no sinecure, and calls for the exercise of great judgment and temper, besides the indispensibles of stage-address and a thorough knowledge of the boards; "as somebody else has somewhere said," a stage-manager must be the ruler as well as the king of his company; he must have the address to avert, or the determination to quash, all cabals; he must bring that discordant body, the *dramatis personæ*, to act with one accord; he must soothe their weak jealousies, soften their hidden animosities, cool their intemperances, check the too aspiring ambition of the one, tickle the self-complacent vanity of the other; be grave with the tragic, funny with the comic, smart with the active, patient with the slow, and upon terms of friendship with all; otherwise, he cannot possibly exercise with efficiency the government of his state.

Although our stage at Merat could scarcely boast such a combination of befitting qualities in our manager as is here stated to be desirable, still he was in many respects admirably suited for his office. Monsieur La Ruse, with all the insinuation

and plausibility of his national character, possessed a ready wit and quick invention; his manner was gay and hearty, but his temper was capricious; and withal he was so supple, so slippery a fellow, that "a man knew not where to have him." It was not merely upon the boards that he performed a part; his life was one continued play, wherein he acted his character in whatever garb he deemed best suited to the scene.

Added to a keen penetration of character, he enjoyed a peculiar tact in administering to the foibles of his puppets, which gained him his object in nearly all he aimed at. He never refused his laugh to any man's jest, however poor: he had never heard a good thing before, even if it had been told him fifty times. It was a common amusement with his brother buskins, to relate a Joe Miller, and then lay it by for repetition a few days subsequently; the "Oh! Capital!! Excellent!!!" the studied cachinnation, accompanied with spread fingers and a shrug of the shoulders, were invariably quite as good on the second or third recital as they had been the first time, and they were precisely those which had been seen five hundred times upon the stage. These qualifications, together with a keen sense of the ridiculous

and a thorough knowledge of all things connected with the stage, rendered him a valuable, though by no means a popular, manager.

La Ruse had a partner in the concern, scarcely inferior to himself in tact, and excelling him in versatility of talent. His most conspicuous stage points were long experience and a good leg, with no contemptible dash of original humour, and, in his own words, " a correct reading of the thing." His walk was chiefly in low-comedy characters, in which he stood first-chop; but he was anything else when occasion demanded,—tragedy, genteel comedy, old, young,—anything, in fact, but the walking gentleman; he was equally successful in Falstaff, or the Shepherdess, *tacet*, in " the Flying Dutchman."

It is commonly said, that a man who can do a little of everything can do nothing well; here, however, the saw did not apply; though perhaps it may be argued that he did more than a little, in doing every thing well; he was a very adept in transmogrifying 'stage-properties,' and with wonderful expedition, would convert a royal robe into a pair of bumpkin's inexpressibles, or produce a monarch's diadem out of an old pair of boots. Many characters worthy of delineation might be selected

from the *corps dramatique*, but their portraits will hardly come within the limits of my sketch.

The rehearsals were by no means the least amusing part of the dramatic entertainments; here a high-born heroine came strutting on in a peasant's petticoat, put on to break her into a more maidenly gait, the upper part of the figure being clad in a drab shooting coat and a tallyho hat; then came the lover, habited very possibly in a countryman's smock, and a red scratch, which he had been fitting on in the wardrobe, when the prompt-call hurried him to his post, the costume being intended perhaps for the after-piece; again, the gardener or groom would very likely appear in a gold-laced uniform jacket, with a pair of leather inexpressibles drawn on over the regimental trowsers, the gold stripes appearing from the knee downward. Then the stage-manager is heard: "Prompt-boy, pass the call for the earl of Westmorland."

"He's sarvin' out the wax-candles for the play-night, your honor."

"Prince John of Lancaster, stand by."

"He's making a nose for Bardolph, sir."

"Then send that drummer who is to play Dame Quickly."

"She's drunk, sir."

After the rehearsal, a pic-nic supper formed no disagreeable conclusion to the exertions of the evening, and here the cheerful laugh went round right merrily; the viands, the wine, the joke, and the song, were all good, and were all full cordially enjoyed.

Upon one occasion, during the race-meeting, when a large influx of society from other stations had rendered the cantonment more than usually gay, the manager had been induced to launch out more boldly than was his custom in preparations for a succession of plays. The first one to be performed was "The Gambler's Fate," and much labour and expense were bestowed upon it. A well-crammed house rewarded the efforts of the manager, and the piece was going off most brilliantly. The feelings of the audience were wrought to the highest pitch of excitement during that beautifully pourtrayed scene, wherein, after Julia's marriage to Albert Germaine, and her husband's imprisonment through the perfidy of Malcour, the latter obtains in the dead of the night admittance to her chamber, by the window. So profound was the silence of the house at this critical juncture, that a pin might have been heard to fall upon the stage during the progress of the scene. Julia, having been repeat-

edly foiled by Malcour, in her efforts to escape or to alarm the house, is thrown into a pitiable state of confusion and horror by the voice of her husband at her chamber-door; he, having effected an escape from confinement and being pursued by the officers of justice, eagerly demands admission. Malcour has secured the key; Albert hears his voice within, and violently bursts open the door, at the moment that Malcour escapes through the window, and Julia, overwhelmed with terror and dismay, swoons, in a dead faint, falling upon her face.

The heroine performed her fall in her best possible style and much to the admiration of the audience; but the whole delusion was suddenly dissipated in bursts and 'screeches of laughter,' by a jump from the summit of the sublime to the abyss of the ridiculous. Julia, bedecked in very splendid bridal array, wore in her hair a large plume of ostrich feathers, and a heavy brilliant comb; the weight of these burst the horse-hair which secured her wig, and with the impetus of the fall, away flew wig, feathers, and all, straight over to the footlights, leaving exposed poor Julia's naked scalp, fresh from the barber's hands and shining as bright as a new penny.

And now, La Ruse, who personated Albert, dis-

played an instance of his consummate self-possession and address in a stage-dilemma. The chamber was supposed to be in darkness, and Julia to be unseen by Albert. La Ruse threw himself between the prostrate bald-pated heroine and the audience, with his cloak thrown over his arm, and his arm extended as if feeling his way; with a well-directed touch of his toe, he then kicked the wig and head-dress within the lady's reach, and managed to screen her from the audience until she had re-adjusted them. She was too much convulsed with internal laughter to do this cleverly, and when raised from the ground by her husband, it was found, "*Ohe! Jam satis*," that the wig had been put on hind-part-before, so that the plumes were hanging down her back. For this difficulty, even La Ruse, with all his masterly address, failed to find a cloak; but after poor Julia had retired from the stage to rectify the evil, the play went off without let or hindrance.

These perplexities are more frequent upon an amateur stage than among professional people, and I could fill a tolerable volume with those which have come under my own notice in India. I will content myself, however, with a couple more anecdotes of the kind.

One night, Lydia Languish being somewhat overcome with the fatigue of acting, and the enervating heat of the climate, had seated herself, while her services were not required, upon a couch behind the scenes, and was refreshing herself with a bottle of iced champaign and a cigar. She was chatting away with some amateur groom or fiddler, when she heard the prompt-boy's call, "Lydia Languish, stand by;" the young lady tossed off her wine, popped her cigar in her mouth, and catching the cue, tripped on to the stage, all flounces and affectation, whiff—whiff—whiff, too well accustomed to the use of tobacco to be at all aware of her singular blunder, until a roar of laughter from the house brought her "to a sinse of her sitivation."

A still more ludicrous scene took place in "High Life below Stairs," which was enacted a short time after the above. The manager being absent, an amateur, who was to play the part of Lovell, was requested to conduct the performance, and in calling the roll, he found not a few of the scene-shifters and supernumerary actors, who had been at a Christmas carousal, too much inebriated to perform their duties: among these was his own servant Robert, who has to open a good deal of the

plot of the piece, not to his master only, but also to the audience: he was so firmly fixed in sleep, that not even a bucket of cold water could restore him to his senses. Here was an awkward predicament, not only for the play in general, but as touching Lovell's own success, for his part depended much on Robert's promptitude.

"Vexation!" he cried, "why there is the nine o'clock gun, and Robert or no Robert, we must ring up. Here, Smith, are you sober? come here to the wardrobe. You must manage to do Robert for us; just look over your part, you know, between the scenes, and keep a quick ear to the prompter, and you will do excellently well; there now, be smart; jump into that livery, and we will ring up,"

"Me, sir!" exclaimed the substitute, with evident trepidation; "Lord, your honour, I never was given to anything beyond the shiftin' in my born days."

"Oh, never mind, you're the best-looking man of the bunch, and will do very well if you only listen to the prompter; and mind, if you stick in the mud, hold your tongue at once, and do not hammer at the sentence; I will carry it on."

Robert was speedily arrayed in a suitable livery,

and in due time made his appearance upon the stage. Poor fellow! it was his *début*, and he was so utterly overwhelmed with confusion, that he lost all recollection of the sentences which he had learned, and the few words which he picked up from the prompter were so feebly uttered, as to be quite inaudible to the house.

Now, according to the plan of the piece, Lovell *pumps* Robert for certain information necessary to the development of the plot; so Lovell hoping to encourage the bashful lackey, said to him, as if in continuation of his part, "come, come, Robert, do not be afraid to tell me all you know," and then giving him the cue for the next sentence, he added, *sotto voce*, "speak out, my good man, speak out; the audience do not hear one single word." Still the man could not get on at all, and at last a few hisses from the pit and gallery completely threw him out.

Lovell, seeing that nothing could be made of him, caught up his next sentence, which happened to run thus: "Now, Robert, it is most necessary that you should speak out; without your confession we can do nothing; come now, do not hesitate; speak out boldly." Robert could endure it no longer; he thought he was being reprimanded before the

audience, and his voice trembled with ill-suppressed anger and mortification as he cried out, "Lord, sir, I do speak out as well as I can; but I ar'n't a larnt the spaiches, and this 'fernal prompter here won't spake out so as I can hear un." Had all the wild beasts from Deyra Dhoon met together in our theatre, they could hardly have made more noise than did our sweet audience. The act drop concluded the scene.

But enough of the stage; an expedition against the tigers may prove more interesting to the reader.

CHAPTER XV.

SPORTING EXCURSION IN THE JUNGULS.

HAVING despatched servants into the junguls, upon the banks of the Ganges, to glean information of the haunts of the tigers, I applied for a month's leave of absence from my military duties, "upon urgent private affairs," as the form expresses it, and, in company with two of my brother officers, made immediate preparation for the excursion.

The first object was to procure elephants, and these we obtained, six in number, from the Company's commissariat. This indulgence is granted by Government to its officers, provided it can be done without infringing upon the demands of the service; but while thus in private employment, both the elephant and his *mahawut* (driver) receive daily, from the person making use of them, a small gratuity, under the name of extra *batta*, whereby they are placed upon more generous diet than when idle; and it is customary for any person who

may apply for elephants to indemnify the commissariat officer against loss, he being responsible to Government for their value, if injured or destroyed otherwise than in the immediate discharge of their duties.

Having laid in a stock of wines and other provisions necessary for our campaign, we sent them forward with our tents and camp-equipage, upon camels, to a village called Tiggeri, upon the east bank of the Ganges, about thirty-five miles N.E. from Merat. Our elephants, servants, and extra horses, were also despatched thither, so as to be in readiness for us upon our arrival.

We had selected May for our excursion, because, though June gives better sport, we were disposed to avoid the extreme heat of the season; and again, though April would have been cooler, the sport would not have been so plentiful. On the first of May, then, a full hour before day-break, we mounted our nags, and having each a couple of relays upon the road, we took the open country in a direct line for our destination, and in three hours' time were thirty miles distant from Merat. The last five miles, however, were not to be so easily run over. We had two channels of the river to cross, and lost much time in seeking the *ghât*,

for the boat used in the transportation of passengers to and fro had been taken from its original situation. Our horses were becoming weary, for we had ridden hard the last stage, and every moment the sun was growing more and more powerful.

While we were discussing the expediency of swimming our horses over, one of my companions, who had incautiously approached too near the edge of the bank, was precipitated, horse and all, into the river, by the loose sandy soil giving way under him. The height of the bank was small, but it was sufficient to prevent either the rider or his horse from effecting a landing anywhere within five hundred yards of the place; so they were fain to be carried down the current to a more convenient spot. Here we found the boat, under cover of a patch of jungul, which had screened it from us while under our very noses: we jumped in, keeping our horses in company with us, and in half an hour were upon the opposite bank: then away we rode, helter-skelter, for our camp, distant at least four miles.

This unfortunate delay occupied as much time almost as the former part of the journey had done; so that, when we reached the village where we had ordered our camp, it was close upon eleven

o'clock, and the sun's rays were beating upon our heads unmercifully; nor was any tolerable shelter to be discovered, for, to the kindling of our utmost wrath, we found that our tents, through delay and carelessness on the part of our servants, had only that moment arrived upon the ground, leaving us with empty stomachs to seek cover from the sun where we might.

Not having broken fast, our tempers were less amiable than they should have been, so we avenged our grievances upon our slaves without compunction, and in retaliation of the discomfort which their negligence had inflicted upon us, we issued a decree that no man in the camp should taste food until the sun had set; and this act we unconscionably carried into effect. This was certainly some little alleviation of our miseries, and for the rest, we, in a measure, ameliorated our misfortune by taking refuge from the red-hot rays of the sun under the scanty tufts of a scraggy old banyan hard-by. Here we lay upon the scorching earth, watching with thirsty mouths the preparations for our long-wished-for meal.

The whole company of cooks, scullions, and *khidmutgars*, were busily employed in grilling chickens, frying fish, frizzling ham and eggs,

baking *chuppatties* (thin cakes of unleavened bread), bubbling omelets, boiling curries, mixing seasonings, and in the thousand-and-one multifarious essentials of an Indian breakfast; when suddenly an immense mass of thick inky clouds spread itself over the western horizon, and came sweeping up the heavens with a velocity which is never seen, I believe, in Old England: the scattered straw and the dried leaves, lying upon the ground around us, began to whirl about in fitful eddies, and, as it grew darker and darker, the cattle shewed evident uneasiness at the impending storm. We, too, though somewhat tardily, became sensible of it, and with all the energy of hungry stomachs, started to our feet to save if possible our half-cooked meal.

The slaves were squatting round their roaring fires, far too intent upon their several duties, and too much enveloped in smoke, to notice what was coming. We shouted passionately to them to secure the breakfast; but alas! before they comprehended our meaning, the weight of the hurricane fell upon us, hurling an overwhelming cloud of sand and dirt in our faces, and carrying away our hats, and every loose article about the camp. We were just recovering from the first surprise,

when a second blast, more violent than the first, struck us, rending the very cooking-pots from the fire, and bowling them away across the plain, the savoury contents a prey to the multitude of canine beggars ever at hand; helter-skelter away went the dogs after the good things, tumbling and rolling over one-another and the pots and pans, howling with impetuous anticipation, and followed by an equally ravenous host of kites and vultures. The servants stood aghast at the havock thus suddenly brought upon their handiwork, and at the moment they began to meditate some exertion for a rescue, another gust capsized the tent upon their heads, and buried them under the folds of the canvas.

It was fortunate that the whole of the tent had not been pitched;—the fly alone was raised, to render us a temporary shelter while the larger tent was being prepared;—for, in a few moments, before the canvas could be dragged from off the prostrate cooks, it had ignited over the fires, and the pole alone could be saved, besides some of the ropes and a portion of the outer fly, which was cut away while the other side was burning. One man alone was injured in the fray; he had been deprived of his eyesight by a kick from one of

his comrades while struggling for release from his thraldom.

The storm was short in proportion to its violence, and as soon as the confusion in a measure subsided, all hands were set to work in collecting the broken remnants of the feast, and in pitching another tent for our reception; and, after all our troubles, a hearty meal was made upon the fragments; though certainly every mouthful of food added more than a due quantum of dirt to the peck which every man is said to devour before he dies.

None of our scouts having found our camp during the day, we despatched messengers into the villages to collect information of tigers, and to learn how the land lay. They returned, however, without any news, and in the cool of the evening we mounted our elephants to pursue the smaller game. In this we did not consider ourselves successful, having no trophy to display beyond a wild boar, a couple of hog-deer, and a scanty bag of black partridges: not that there was any dearth of game; but the truth was, that we were three *griffs** at our work, never having been out shooting in the *háoda* before, and finding the shuffling gait

* Contraction of Griffin: a cognomen used in India to denote such as are but recent comers to the country; and thence applied to all who may be ignorant or inexperienced on any subject.

of the elephant very perplexing to our aim. This inconvenience, which is felt by all beginners, is very quickly surmounted; a few days' practice will set aside the difficulty, and both hand and eye become so accustomed to the motion of the animal, that men habituated to this kind of sport will generally be found to shoot much better from the *háoda* than on foot.

Though I believe the word *háoda* to be almost as well known to fire-side travellers as the word *palanquin;* yet, I doubt, if they have any more correct notion of the real fashion of the former, as used by sportsmen, than Johnson's Dictionary supplies of the latter. Old prints of wild sports give specimens of state *háodas* after the fashion of the year one; and modern writers seem to think that such errors have been long since corrected. There is neither tinsel, nor embossment, nor silk canopy, nor fringe, nor tassels, pertaining to the modern sporting *háoda*. It consists of two seats, placed like those of a phaeton, fenced around with a light but substantial frame-work of wood, with iron clamps, and pannelled with open cane-work or with leather: the upper frame is surmounted by an iron rail, like that upon a coach-box, to prevent the rider from being dismounted by any sudden evolution

or unsteadiness of the elephant. The sportsman is seated in front with his battery on either side of him; this generally consists of four double-barrelled guns, and a rifle for long shots. In the rear seat, technically called the *káhause,* is a man carrying a large umbrella, or *chatta,* to screen his master from the sun; but this he puts aside when going into action with a tiger, in order that he may be able to load his master's guns as fast as they are discharged; he also undertakes the care of the ammunition, and whatever provision it is necessary to carry.

It should be mentioned, that, in beating for tigers expressly, it is an understood thing among sportsmen, that none of the party shall fire at any smaller game, lest the nobler objects of the sport should be alarmed by the firing: thus the deer, hog, hares, and birds are allowed to pass with impunity, however numerous, if tigers be suspected to be lurking in the neighbourhood; for they are very wild, and take their departure from their common haunts the moment they fear an invasion.

Late at night, some of our scouts came in, with information of a couple of tigers at a village called Shaerpore, several miles distant: the name, signifying the Place of Tigers, was sufficiently à-

propos; as much so as the name Tiggeri, famous for its abundance of wild hog; though I am not aware by-the-bye that the word *Tig*, in the Hindostani, has any reference to the swine tribe. Immediately upon receipt of this news, we caused tents to be sent on to the village over-night, andal so despatched our elephants to within a mile of the spot, with the intention of riding to the ground on horseback at daybreak the next morning. I have said that we were all three griffs at tiger-shooting, and never having beheld a tiger at large, and in the majesty of his natural freedom, it may readily be believed that we were eager for the first encounter.

Before the dawn of the next morning, we roused the camp, and by the time that the first bright streak of light appeared in the east, we were marching quietly towards the scene of action, having fortified our stomachs with a cup of piping hot tea before we started. We were accompanied by the *shikárri*, or native sportsman, who had given our servants intelligence of the game, and who had followed them to camp for his reward, having placed men of his own to watch the movements of the beasts in his absence. This man's name was Mirchi, a veteran in his calling, and well

known to every sportsman in the neighbourhood of Merat, as one of the most daring and successful tiger scouts in India. The old fellow is a man of great fame, and a character in his own sphere, and as such deserves notice. His age is possibly fifty years, though he himself can come no nearer to the mark than that he is an old man; having no idea of the date of his nativity beyond what is suggested by the evidence of his present strength and constitution. His figure is tall and straight, and indicative of muscular power and energy far superior to what is enjoyed by the mass of his countrymen. His hair and beard are silvery white, and his deep-set, twinkling, inquisitive eyes are overhung with shaggy bushes of grizzled bristles doing duty as eyebrows. His spare figure is usually clad in a most simple but becoming costume, the upper part of his person being covered simply with a purple scarf, thrown over his shoulders, and having on his head a bright crimson turban. His right hand is armed with a heavy bludgeon, formed of a male bamboo, about four feet in length, and about the thickness of a man's wrist, having six inches of one end shod with a spiral worm of iron; a weapon which no man could affect to despise, having once felt the weight

of it, particularly when wielded by so muscular an arm. In his *kummurbund* (waist-cloth) he carries a handsome dagger, which was given to him by Brigadier Brown, C.B., who, as a keen sportsman, and an admirer of true pluck, patronized the old *shikarri*.

Mirchi says, and I fully believe him, that he has been present at the deaths of more than a thousand tigers, shot by officers and English gentlemen; and that, before he entered upon his present mode of life, as an informer against them, he had killed upwards of two hundred with his own hand. After the hardships and adventures of his youth, the old man, finding his vigour of body failing, retired upon a less laborious branch of his profession; and now, instead of pursuing the game himself, he gains an honest livelihood by seeking the haunts of his former personal enemies, and betraying them to such members of the sporting community as are ready to afford him a fair remuneration for his trouble and risk.

The old man is full of anecdote, and adventurous tales of the difficulties and encounters which he himself has undergone, and of some few ultra-tragic disasters, which have befallen others in his presence; he tells his story with a great deal of impassioned gesture, and a seasoning of dry

humour, of that description, which, having never before found it in one of his class, I strongly suspect to have been picked up by him from the facetious sporting Englishmen with whom he has been conversant in matters of his calling.

We came up with our elephants about a mile from the belt of jungul where the tigers were supposed to lie: here we mounted for action, loading, and carefully re-examining our guns. The best elephants of the number had, of course, been selected for our *háodas;* the others, being only required for beating up the spaces intervening between us, were of less consequence. Upon one of these we put Mirchi, and committing our course and manner of advance to his guidance, we formed a line upon the east side of the jungul, which, fortunately for us, was also the leeward side, so that we had thus two great advantages; the sun at our backs, instead of in our faces, and the wind carrying the noise of our advance from, instead of to, the game. I took the centre of the line, and each friend a flank, the beating elephants walking in the intervals. In this order of battle we moved forward, making our way through the high jungul grass in silence; nothing could be

more exciting than this slow and deliberate approach upon a powerful enemy.

The sagacious beasts on which we rode seemed aware that we were striking at the higher game, for, as the deer bounded almost from beneath their feet, they took no notice of them, nor did they stop, as is their habit, to allow their rider to take aim; but continued to advance step by step, with a slow and careful pace, as if designing to make as little noise as possible. Every step increased the excitement, and every head of game which was roused by our approach we thought must be the tiger; but we were green hands at the sport, as our friend Mirchi politely told us, for the timid deer are not apt to lie quite so close upon the quarters of their destroyers.

In this manner, we advanced at least half a mile through the jungul, without coming upon any signs of those we sought, and we were naturally beginning to fear that Mirchi had conducted us upon a false sent; but we still held on our march, and soon found the small game less abundant, as the jungul grew swampy and difficult of penetration. I was about to express my disappointment, and to recommend our trying other

ground, when my elephant came suddenly upon the half-devoured carcase of a bullock, around which the ground was trodden down, and the jungul torn in fragments; the slaughter was evidently recent, and no doubt the tiger had made his banquet shortly before daybreak. "Ha! ha!" I cried, "we have him now; look here, *Mahawut*, here are his foot-prints, each as large as a *chuppatti*."

"*Such hi khodáwund*," replied the obsequious driver, echoing each word of my exclamation, "*ab jeldi milega, oos-ki punja chuppatti ki muafik burra hi*."

Mirchi came up, and having made his comments upon the carcase, passed a hint to the two marksmen on the flanks to be upon the *qui-vive;* presently, one of the elephants commenced trumpetting through his trunk, and the whole line advanced more warily. This is the most exciting stage of the pursuit; every eye is fixed upon the long jungul-grass, watching eagerly for the hidden monster; every waving blade is taken for the tiger, and every gun is raised to smite him. After passing the carcase, we found the jungul much higher than heretofore, it being in some places even with the tops of our *háodas*; but here

the ground, though swampy, was not so adhesive as to impede the progress of our line.

My elephant now began to speak, uttering a long low rumbling noise internally, accompanied with occasional nasal squeaks, the signals of alarm and caution, and then a loud shout of enthusiasm from old Mirchi proclaimed the sport in view, though we were greeted neither by roar or charge, as is generally supposed to be the case. The only circumstance which attracted our notice was a slight waving of the grass in front of us. "*Mar! Mar!*" screamed the old *shikarri*, in the vehemence of his excitement, "Fire! Fire! he will get away." A shot from the left *háoda* was the first fired, but without effect, for the grass in front of us continued to wave about as if moved by some bulky animal below it, slinking away a-head of us.

"Fire, again!" cried Mirchi, "do you wish to let him escape?" I fired, but with no better success than my friend before me, except that the grass began to move faster, as if the brute beneath was hastening his retreat. A double shot from the right did as little execution, and old Mirchi, with ardent interest in the pursuit, grew angry at our want of skill.

"Lower down, lower down," he cried; "what are the gentlemen doing that they fire at the grass and not at the tiger? Ah! if I had Judge Kummul Sahib, or Broon Sahib, or E-smit Sahib in the *háodas*, it would not be so." A simultaneous discharge from all three batteries was instantly followed by a roar, such as never was heard within the walls of the Tower, or Exeter Change.

"Ha! that is bravely done," cried the old man, changing his note, and every feature of his aged countenance working with excitement; "press on now, gentlemen, and give him chase; you are young hands at this sport, and shall make the most of it; press on now, Mahawuts." And in obedience to his command, we urged our elephants forward at a long trot: they, it may be believed, shared in the general excitement, and exhibited their interest by a mixed concert of trumpeting and rumbling of their thunders within them.

The tiger, for a moment, made a pause, as if meditating vengeance of the injury he had received; but he again stole off, until he unexpectedly found himself in a circular patch of barren ground, quite free from cover: the spot was like a little amphitheatre in the centre of the jungul, which

looked as if constructed purposely for the encounter. As he entered upon this bare spot, he turned for a moment, and surveyed with terrible demonstations of his wrath the formidable line advancing upon him. He was wounded in the hind quarter, whence the blood was slowly oozing; it was a glorious sight to see how proudly the mighty monster stood to reconnoitre us, displaying his tremendous tusks and grinders, as if to warn us off, and then making the heavens ring again, in echo to his awful voice.

By mutual consent our fire was reserved until we entered upon the open ground, and then a shot which grazed his shoulder brought him at once to the charge: raising himself upon his hind legs, he uttered another yell of mingled agony and rage, and with a concentration of all his powers, he rushed at my elephant, evidently with the intention of fixing himself upon its head. Firmly and without wavering, did old Eima (the elephant, a female) stand her ground, though not without preparing for the charge, if it should be made good: this, however, was not permitted; for when the tiger was within ten yards of me, having taken a careful aim, I put a ball into his chest; and then a volley was poured in on all sides, which quickly

made him bite the dust. Again he rose, again and again he endeavoured to effect a charge upon one or other of the elephants; but we were too strong for him, and a couple of shots through the skull brought him again to the earth, where, with all the tenacity of life attributed to the feline race, he lay, tearing the stumps of jungle in his now impotent wrath, and glaring upon us with his flaming eyes a picture of vengeful antipathy even in the throes of death. I pushed my elephant close up to him, and as we then thought, terminated his agonies by putting a ball clean through his skull; for his head sunk upon the ground, and his eyes closed.

I was about to dismount and examine the fallen monster, when Mirchi cried out to me, "*Wa! Wa! Sahib;* are we to lose the other tiger while you are eating this one? I saw him steal off to the other side of the jungul while you were despatching this fine fellow. Mirchi is an old sportsman, and has two keen eyes in his head, or you would have lost this second tiger; come, gentlemen, will you be pleased to give the order for our advance? The business of this day is not yet finished; let us do the work more cleverly next time."

We did as Mirchi advised, and he led us directly to the spot where the female had concealed herself. She was an animal of smaller growth, and did not shew us such good sport as the former one, in consequence of an early shot from one of my companions having taken effect in her brain: this was unfortunate, as the female, generally speaking, exhibits even more courage and ferocity in the encounter than does the male. We packed her upon one of the *guddi* elephants (those not carrying a *háoda*), and returned to the scene of the first engagement, where to our astonishment we found our former enemy still breathing, though more than half an hour had elapsed since we had left him. Mirchi despatched him by burying his dagger up to the hilt in his chest, and he was then mounted upon the elephant, and carried into camp side by side with his partner.

In our way back to camp, having ascertained that there were no more tigers in the neighbourhood, we beat the ground to the right and left of that which we had gone over in the morning, and within a couple of hours, we bagged eight hog-deer and three of the swine tribe; so that we looked upon our day's sport as a highly successful one.

In the cool of the evening, again we sallied forth on horseback, spear in hand, against the wild hogs, and were happy enough to slay a very fine one; though I cannot boast of any share in the glory of the chase, for my horse, putting his foot in a rat-hole, came to the ground with me, and incapacitated himself from further work: so that I was fain to bestride an ugly baggage-camel, and look on upon the dexterous deeds of my comrades, without participating in the sport. A firm seat, a delicate hand upon the bridle, a quick eye, a steady and skilful delivery of the spear, and good pluck, are indispensible in this nice sport. The eye must be kept upon the hog, and the horse must be left to select his own footing through broken ground or other impediments, for if the attention be for an instant withdrawn from the chase, ten to one are the odds that the hog will run to cover unmarked, and the game is lost.

It is not only a more scientific, but it is also a more dangerous sport than tiger-shooting; for if the horse be borne to the earth in the charge, the rider will have little chance of escape, unless very expertly supported by his companions, who must make a diversion in his favour.

But we must away; Mirchi has more sport

for us, and the old man loves not the mention of hog-hunting: he never engaged in it himself, and he declares it to be unsportsman-like, inasmuch as it is depriving the tigers of their lawful prey; and if their food be not plentiful in the level country, it is pretty certain they will remain in the secret places of their native forests, rather than expose themselves to the eye of the marksman. For the same very sufficient reason, he abominates the unrestricted wholesale destruction of the deer, so universally practised by those who visit the junguls. His objection is undoubtedly valid: the number of tigers throughout the plains has very greatly diminished within the last few years, and in junguls where an expedition was formerly rewarded with seven or eight tigers daily, the sportsman may now think himself fortunate if he should come upon that number in the course of a month.

END OF VOLUME I.

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